



THE TRUE
NATURE OF IMPOSTURE,
FULLY DISPLAYED
THE LIFE
OF
MAHOMED

*A Discourse annexed for the Vindication of Christianity
from the Charge of Imposture.*

Offered to the Consideration of the DEISTS of the
PRESENT AGE.

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TO THE
READER.

THE great prevailing of infidelity in the present age, making it the duty of every one of us that have undertaken the ministry of the gospel of Jesus Christ, to endeavour to put a stop thereto ; that I may in some measure do my part herein, is a sufficient reason to justify the present publication. But besides, the poison having, I fear, reached some places, where it is my particular duty to prevent its mischiefs ; and infected some persons, for whose eternal welfare, as well as temporal, I have reason to be nearly concerned ; I have hereby been more especially engaged to set forth the ensuing history, with the tract subjoined thereto, for an antidote against it. And if I can hereby avail any thing with those who have cast off Christianity as an imposture, to make them see the error of their apostacy, I shall then obtain the full end I propose ; if not, at least I shall dis-

charge my conscience and my duty, in doing the best I can in order thereto.

That which at present seems mostly to carry men away into this infidelity, is the giddy humour which too many among us, especially of the younger sort, are liable unto, in following whatsoever hath gotten into fashion and vogue: For these, looking no farther than what prevails most among such as they converse with, of course fall in with it, whatsoever it be, without any other consideration, but that they think it the dress which is most fashionable and genteel for them to appear in, and the mode wherein they may make the most acceptable figure among the company they keep. And therefore that kind of infidelity which is called Deism, being of late impiously patronized by too many of those who govern the humours of the times, abundance of this sort of unthinking people have merely, out of compliance with them, run in thereto, and confidently taken upon them to call Christianity a cheat and an imposture, without ever having considered, what an imposture is, or whether any of the marks and properties thereof can possibly agree with this holy religion, or no.

That therefore these may see what it is they

charge Christianity with, and how far all the marks and properties thereof are from having any agreement with it, I have in the ensuing history, which contains the life of that famous Impostor, who is on both sides equally acknowledged to be such, fully laid open what an imposture is; and in the discourse subjoined thereto, shewn that none of these marks and properties which are so visible in the imposture of Mahomet, and must be also in all other impostures in religion, can possibly be charged upon that holy religion which we profess. And an history being that which gives the most lively and sensible representations of a matter, and books of this nature being such as most obtain the favour of being read, I hope I have taken the properest method of coming home to the consciences of those to whom I write.

And that I may not be thought to draw this Life of Mahomet, with design to set forth his imposture in the foulest colours I am able, the better to make it serve my present purpose, I have been careful to set down all my authorities in the margin, and at the end of the book have given an account of all the authors from whom I collected them.

And that I may the more remove all suspi-

cion of this matter, I think it requisite to acquaint you, That although at present I have adapted the Life of Mahomet to this purpose, yet it was not originally designed for it; it being when I first wrote it, only the interſperſed parts of one chapter of a much larger work, which I intended for the public, viz. The History of the Ruin of the Eastern Church; which beginning from the death of the Emperor Mauricius, Anno Dom. 602. was designed to have been brought down to the fall of the Saracen empire, which happened Anno Dom. 936. when the governors of provinces under the Caliph, uſurping the ſovereign authority, each in their ſeveral diſtricts, did put an end to that large and formidable empire, by dividing it among them.

And ſuch an hiſtory I promiſed myſelf might be of ſome uſe in our preſent age: For notwithstanding thoſe earneſt expectations and ſtrong hopes, which we entertained in the beginning of this government, of having our diviſions healed, and all thoſe breaches which they have cauſed in the church again made up; finding thoſe of the ſeparation ſtill to retain the ſame ſpirit on the one ſide, and ſome others to be ſo violently bent on the other, againſt every thing

that might tend to mollify and allay it, as to frustrate all those excellent designs which have been laid in order thereto ; I thought I could not better let those men see what mischief they both do hereby to the common interest of Christianity, than by laying before them the grievous ruin and desolation, which from the like cause happened to the churches of the East, once the most flourishing of the whole earth. For they having drawn the abstrusest niceties into controversy, which were of little or no moment to that which is the chief end of our holy Christian religion, and divided and subdivided about them into endless schisms and contentions, did thereby so destroy that peace, love and charity from among them, which the gospel was given to promote, and instead thereof continually provoked each other to that malice, rancour, and every evil work, that they lost the whole substance of their religion, while they thus eagerly contended for their own imaginations concerning it, and in a manner drove Christianity quite out of the world by those very controversies in which they disputed with each other about it. So that at length having wearied the patience and long-suffering of God, in thus turning this holy reli-

gion into a firebrand of hell, for contention, strife, and violence among them, which was given them out of his infinite mercy to the quite contrary end, for the salvation of their souls, by living holily, righteously, and justly in this present world, he raised up the Saracens to be the instruments of his wrath, to punish them for it; who taking advantage of the weakness of power, and the distractions of councils, which these divisions had caused among them, soon over-run with a terrible devastation all the Eastern provinces of the Roman empire. And having fixed that tyranny over them, which hath ever since afflicted those parts of the world, turned every where their churches into mosques, and their worship into an horrid superstition; and instead of that holy religion which they had thus abused, forced on them that abominable imposture of Mahometism, which dictating war, bloodshed, and violence in matters of religion, as one of its chiefest virtues, was in truth the most proper for those, who had afore by their schism and contentions resolved all the religion they had thereinto. And when the matter came to this trial, some of those who were the hottest contenders about Christianity, became the first apostates from it;

and they, who would not afore part with a nicety, an abſtrufe notion or any unreaſonable ſcruple, for the peace of the church, were ſoon brought by the ſword, at their throats, to give up the whole in compliance to the pleaſure of a barbarous and ſavage conqueror. And no wonder that ſuch, who had afore wrangled away the ſubſtance of their religion in contention and ſtrife againſt each other, and eat out the very heart of it by that malice and rancour which they ſhewed in their controverſy about it, became eaſily content, when under this force, to part with the name alſo. Thus thoſe once glorious and moſt flouriſhing churches, for a puniſhment of their wickedneſs, being given up to the inſult, ravage, and ſcorn of the worſt of enemies, were on a ſudden overwhelmed by them with ſo terrible a deſtruction, as brought them to that low and miſerable ſtate, under the preſſures of which they have ever ſince groaned; wherein they, retaining no more than ſome few and lamentable ruins of what they once were, ſeem thus to be continued even unto this day, by the all-wiſe providence of God, in the ſame miſerable condition, under the pride and perſecution of Mahometan tyranny, for no other end, but to be an example

and warning unto others, against that wickedness of separation and division, by which they were brought thereto. A sad memento to us ; for of all Christian churches now remaining in the world, which is there that hath more reason than we at this present, to learn instruction from this example, and take warning therefrom ? For are not our divisions brought to much the same height with theirs, which drew down from the just hand of God this terrible destruction upon them ; when men making no conscience of breaking the public peace of the church, divide and subdivide from it into endless factions, schisms, and contentions, about their own imaginations ? When they durst reject the ancient and primitive government of the church, which was by the direction of God's holy Spirit established in it from the beginning, to make way for new schemes of their own invention ; and are content to ruin all, rather than not obtain their humour herein ? When they will have the decency and order of our outward worship condemned as crimes ; and for the privilege of praying in public, according to their own unpremeditated conceptions, without method or sense, advance such arguments against our liturgies and forms of prayer,

as have in a manner totally destroyed the devotion of the nation ? When they scruple more at the kneeling to God in the holy sacrament of the Eucharist, while they are receiving from him one of his greatest mercies, and ought to be rendering to him their highest thanksgiving in return thereto, than in breaking the chiefest of his commandments ; and thus in a manner resolve all religion into contending against our just and legal establishments about it. And when others, on the other hand, whose duty it is to labour for our peace, would rather have this devouring flame of strife and division still continued among us, than throw in one bucket of water to cool and allay it : I say, when matters are brought to this pass, do we not equal, or rather excel that wickedness of contention, strife, and division, for which God poured out his fierce wrath upon those once most flourishing churches of the East, and in so fearful a manner brought them to destruction thereby ? And have we not reason then to be warned by the example ? Have we not reason to fear, that God may in the same manner raise up some Mahomet against us for our utter confusion ; and when we cannot be contented with that blessed establishment of divine worship and

truth which he hath in so great purity given unto us, permit the wicked one by some other such instrument to overwhelm us instead thereof with his foulest delusions? And by what the Socinian, the Quaker, and the Deist begin to advance in this land, we may have reason to fear, that wrath hath some time since gone forth from the Lord for the punishment of these our iniquities and gainsayings, and that the plague is already begun among us.

That therefore we may fully see to what these mischiefs among us lead, and be influenced thereby to such an amendment as might divert the judgment from us, was the reason that made me design the publication of the history I have mentioned; wherein my purpose was to give an account, first of the controversies which miserably divided those Eastern churches, and then of that grievous calamity and ruin which happened to them thereupon, through that deluge of Mahometan tyranny and delusion which overwhelmed all those provinces in which they were planted, and hath continued there to the afflicting of the poor remainders of them with misery and persecution ever since. For mens minds being usually more influenced by example, than by

precept or exhortation ; and easier convinced of the mischief which any evil leads to, by seeing the sufferings of others herein, than by the greatest strength of reason and argument that can be pressed upon them in order hereto, I hope that, perchance, by laying open before the contending parties here among us, what mischief those Eastern churches suffered in the like case, through that dismal ruin which was by their divisions brought upon them, I might awaken them with this affrighting example, to think of those things which might tend to their peace ; and hereby prevail with them to set some steps toward the happy re-establishment of it among us, which as yet no reason or argument hath been able to induce them to.

But when I had made my collections, and gone a great way in putting my last hand to the compofure, those disturbances that happened about the doctrine of the Holy Trinity among us, gave me a reflection which put a stop to my pen, and made me resolve to surcease the whole work. For perceiving what advantage the unwary stirring of this controversy did give the Atheist, the Deist, and the Socinian, for the advancing of their impieties, by confounding and distracting the minds of

men with their cavils and objections against what we hold in this mystery to be above our understandings fully to comprehend ; and how several of them did, in a manner so licentious as was scarce ever before allowed in a Christian state, exercise their wits in this matter, I durst not, considering the subject of this book, venture it abroad in so wanton and lewd an age. For the two great mysteries of Christianity (and which will be always such unto us while in this state of ignorance and infirmity) being the doctrine of the Trinity, and that of the hypostatical union ; and this latter being the subject about which all those divisions were, which occasioned that ruin of those churches, of which in this history an account was purposed to be given ; and this necessarily leading me therein, not only to unravel all those controversies which they made about it, but also to unfold all the niceties and subtil notions which each sect did hold concerning it, I had reason to fear, that those who made such work with one of the mysteries of our holy religion, would not be less bold with the other, which is altogether as great, were it in that manner laid open unto them, as it is in this history contained ; and therefore I rather chose totally to

suppress my labours, than run the hazard, in their publication, of doing more hurt than good thereby. Only that part which relates to the life of Mahomet, after having gathered it together out of that chapter of this history where it lay interspersed with other matters, I have here published, to answer that design which I have already given an account of.

As to the Discourse annexed, I have directed it only to those Deists, who according to Mr. Blount's description of them, hold a Providence, and future rewards and punishments. For such seeming to retain the common principles of natural religion and reason, allow a sufficient foundation whereon to be discoursed with. But as to the Atheist, who denies the being of a God, which all things else prove; and the Epicurean Deist, who allowing his Being, denies his providence, and his government over us, which all the occurrences of our life become constant arguments for, they being such as must necessarily reject first principles, and bid defiance to all manner of reason, before they can so far blind themselves as to arrive hereto, do leave no room for any argument but that of the whip and^r lash, to convince them of those impious absurdities, and therefore de-

serve not by any other method to be dealt with. Besides, if you will know the true reason which induceth the Atheist to deny the being of a God, and the Epicurean Deist his government over us ; it is, that they may give themselves up, without fear of future judgment, to all those bestial enjoyments of lust and sensuality which their corrupt hearts carry them after ; and therefore it not being the reason of the man, but the brutal appetite of the beast that makes them such, they deserve no otherwise than as beasts to be treated by us ; and for this reason, as I write not to them, so I desire to be understood to have nothing to do with them.

For the clearer understanding of the history, I desire you to take notice, that in the proper names, *Al* is a particle which signifieth in *Arabic* the same with the *English* The, or the *Greek* ὁ, ἡ, τὸ, as in *Al Abas* ; *Ebn*, or with the particle *Al* after it, *Ebno'l* is the Son, and *Abu*, or with the particle *Al* after it, *Abu'l* is the Father ; and thus *Mahomet* is called *Ebn Abdollah Abu Casem*, that is, *The Son of Abdollah, the Father of Casem*. For it was usual with the *Arabs* to take their names of distinction from their sons as well as from their fathers ; and thus *Ebno'l Athir*, is

the son of Al Athir, and Abu'l Abbas is the Father of Al Abbas ; Abd, or with the particle Al after it Abdo'l, signifieth Servant ; and thus Abdo'llah signifieth the Servant of God, and Abdo'l Shems, the Servant of the Sun. In these and all other Arabic names I exactly follow the Arabic pronunciation, without regarding how they have been written or spelled by any other Western author that hath treated of them ; and that the rather, because of the agreement which the Arabic hath with the English both in the power of its letters and the pronunciation of its words, there being no language in the world more a-kin to ours, than the Arabic is in these particulars: only as to the name of the Impostor himself, I rather choose to make use of the vulgar manner of writing it, because of the notoriety of it, than make any change, although to the truth, from that which hath been generally received ; and therefore I call him every where *Mahomet*, although *Mohammed* be the alone true and proper pronunciation of the name.

To conclude ; on thy perusal of this treatise, as far as thou hast need of what is designed thereby, either for the restoration of thy faith,

or the confirmation of it ; so far I pray God it
may be useful to thee, and I am

The hearty wisher of thy peace

and everlasting salvation,

Norwich,
March 15.
1696--7.

II. PRIDEAUX.

THE
L I F E
OF
M A H O M E T

MAHOMET (or, according to the true pronunciation of the word, Mohammed) was born ^a at Mecca, a city of Arabia, of the tribe of the Korashites, ^b which was reckoned the noblest in all that country, and was descended in a direct line of primogeniture from Pher Koraiſh, the first founder of it, from whom they derive his pedigree in this manner; ^b the son of Pher Koraiſh was Galeb; the son of Galeb, Lawa; the son of Lawa, Caab; the son of Caab, Morrah, whose younger brother was Ada; from whom was descended Omar Ebno'l Chattab, that was Calif. The sons of Morrah were Chelab, Tayem, and Yokdah: from Tayem, Abu-Beker, and Telha; and from Yokdah, Chalid Ebn Walid, had their descent. Chelab was he who first gave the months of the year those names by which the Arabs ever since have called them, even to this day.

^a Abul Faraghius, Abul Feda. Elmacin. Alkodai, &c.

^b Hottingeri Hiſt. Orient. lib. 1. c. 4.

^c Abul Feda. Pocockii Spec. Hiſt. Arab. p. 50. & 51. Ezechelenſis Hiſt. Arab. Part 1. c. 3. Liber de Generatione & Nutritura Mahometis.

They had formerly other names, ^d but Chelab having given them those new ones, they first grew into use among the Korashites, and after, by the authority of Mahomet, when he had brought all the rest of the tribes of the Arabs under his power, obtained every where else, and the old ones became totally abolished. The eldest son of Chelab, was Cofa; and the younger, Zahrah, from whom was Amena, the mother of Mahomet. ^e Cofa was very famous among the Korashites, for gaining to his family the keeping of the keys of the Caaba, and with them the presidency of that temple, which is the same to which the Mahometans now make their pilgrimage at Mecca, and was then as much celebrated for the Heathen worship among the Arabs, as it hath since been for the Mahometan; and therefore the presidency of it was a matter of great moment, as being a station, which rendered him that was in it honourable through all Arabia. It was before in the possession of Abu-Gabshan, of the tribe of the Cozaites, who were of the ancient race of the Arabs, descended from Joktan, and formerly had their dwelling in Yaman, or Arabia Felix, till being driven thence by an inundation from the breaking down of the banks of the lake Aram, which destroyed their country, they came and settled in the valley of Marry, not far from Mecca, and from thence they were called Cozaites, which signifieth the *cutting off*, because by this remove they were separated, and as it were cut off from the rest of their kindred. They had not long lived at Marry, till they grew so powerful, as to make themselves masters of Mecca, and also of the caaba, or temple, which stood there, and held both the government of the one, and the presidency of the other, for

^d Golii Notæ ad Alfraganum. p. 4.

^e Abul Feda. Pocockii Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 42, 50, & 342. Ecchelenfis Hist. Arab, p. 1. c. 3. Fortalitium Fidei, lib. 4. Confid. 1.

many ages after ; till at length the latter falling into the hands of Abu Gabshan, a weak and silly man, Cofa circumvented him while in a drunken humour, and bought of him the keys of the temple, and with them the presidency of it, for a bottle of wine. But Abu Gabshan, being gotten out of his drunken fit, sufficiently repented of his foolish bargain ; from whence grew these proverbs among the Arabs ; ‘ more vexed with late repentance than Abu Gabshan ;’ and, ‘ more silly than Abu Gabshan ?’ which are usually said of those who part with a thing of great moment for a small matter. However, he was not so silly, but when he came to himself, he understood the value of what he had parted with, and would fain have retrieved it again ; to which purpose he gave Cofa some disturbance in the possession of his purchase ; and the rest of the Cozaïtes joined with him herein, as not liking that he should be thus deprived of his right by a trick, and thereby the presidency of the temple go out of their tribe into that of the Korashites. But Cofa being aware hereof, sent privately to all the Korashites, who were dispersed abroad among the neighbouring tribes, to meet with him at Mecca on a day appointed ; with whose help falling on the Cozaïtes, he expelled them all out of the city, and from that time the whole possession of Mecca remained to the Korashites ; and Cofa, and his posterity in a right line down to Mahomet, had the presidency of the temple, and the chief government of the city ever after.

The eldest son of Cofa was Abd Menaph, and the younger Abdol Uzza, names taken from the idols of the temple, of which Cofa had now gotten the presidency. For Abd Menaph in the Arab language, signifieth the servant or worshipper of Menaph ; and Abdol Uzza, the servant or worshipper of Uzza, which were heathen deities then worshipped by the Arabians. Of the posterity of Abdol Uzza, were Zobair, and Cadigha the wife of Mahomet.

The eldest son of ^f Abd Menaph was Hasm, and the younger Abdhasm, whose son was Ommia, from whom the Ommiadæ, who for so many descents governed the Saracen empire. Hasm, as well as his father and grandfather, was prince of his tribe, and a person of great note in his time through all Arabia. From him the kindred of Mahomet are called Hasmites; and he who governs at Mecca and Medina (who must always be of the race of Mahomet) is called in their language, ^g Al Emamo'l Hasm, that is, the *prince of the Hasmites*, even unto this day.

The son of Hasm was ^h Abdol Motallab, who succeeded his father in the government of his tribe at Mecca, and had to do with two very formidable enemies in his time; ⁱ Chosroes, the first of that name, king of Persia, and Abraham king of the Ethiopians. The first having extended his empire a great way into Arabia, on the north of Mecca; and the other possessed himself of the kingdom of the Homerites on the south, became very dangerous neighbours unto him; but he defended himself against both, and forced the latter to a very shameful retreat, when he came with a numerous army to besiege the city, as shall be hereafter more fully related. He lived to a very great age, being ^k an hundred and ten years old at his death: he had thirteen sons, their names were as followeth; Abdollah, Hamzah, Al-Abbas, Abu Taleb, Abu Lahab, Al-Gidak, Al-Hareth, Jahel, Al-Mokawam, Dorar, Al-Zobair, Ketham, and Abdal Caaba. The eldest of them,

^f Abul Feda. Pococ. Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 51. Ecchelenfis Hist. Arab. Part 1. c. 3. Liber de Generatione & Nutritura Mahometis.

^g Sionita in Append. ad Geographiam Nubienfem, c. 7.

^h Abul Feda. Pocock. Ecchelenfis, ib.

ⁱ Hottinger, Hist. Orient. lib. 1. c. 3.

^k Elmacin. lib. 1. c. 1.

Abdollah, having married Amena, the daughter of Waheb, was by her the father of Mahomet ¹ who was born at Mecca in the month of May, in the year of our Lord 571. Justin the Second being then emperor of Constantinople, and Chofroes the First, king of Persia. ,

By this it appears, Mahomet was not of such mean and vile parentage as some have asserted. For being a Korashite, he was of the noblest tribe of all Arabia, and the family he was born of, was the most considerable of that tribe, as being that which, for several descents together, had borne the chief rule over it. However, in the beginning of his life he was in ^m a very poor and despicable condition. For his father dying before he was two years old, and while his grandfather Abdol Motallab was still living, all the power and wealth of his family became derived to his uncles, especially to Abu Taleb, who after the death of Abdol Motallab his father, bore the chief sway in Mecca as long as he lived, which was to a very great age; and under his protection chiefly was it that Mahomet, when he first broached his imposture, was supported against all his opposers, and grew up to that height thereby, as to be able after his death to carry it on, and also establish it through all Arabia by his own power.

After his father's death, he continued under the tuition of his mother till the eighth year of his age; when ⁿ she also dying, he was taken home to his grandfather, Abdol Motallab, who at his death, which happened the next year after, com-

¹ Abul Feda. Alkodai. Abul Faraghius. p. 101. Elmacin. lib. 1. c. 1. Pocock, Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 170. Hottinger. Hist. Orient. lib. 1. c. 6.

^m Abul Feda. Abunazar. Abul Faraghius, p. 101. Elmaciu. 1. 1. c. 1. Hottinger. Hist. Orient. 1. 2. c. 1. Guadagnol. Tract. 2. c. 10.

ⁿ Abul Feda. Abul Faraghius, p. 101. Elmacin. lib. 1. c. 1.

mitted him to the care of his uncle, Abu Taleb, to be educated by him out of charity, who carrying on a trade of merchandize, took him into this employment, and bred him up in the business of it. For Mecca ° being situated in a very barren soil, could not of itself subsist; and therefore the inhabitants were forced to betake themselves to merchandize for their support; and the best men among them had scarce any other estate but in their stock wherewith they did traffic; and therefore they all betook themselves to this course of life, which they seem to have received down from the Ismaelites, from whom they were descended, and in the same manner as they carried on a trade into Syria, Persia, and Egypt, on camels backs, furnishing those countries with such commodities, as came to them from India, Ethiopia, and other southern parts, for which commerce they were very advantageously situated, as lying near the Red Sea, where they had the port ¶ Jodda, the most convenient for shipping in all those straits.

And in this course of life Mahomet was bred up under his uncle; and as soon as he was of a fit age, he was sent with his camels into Syria. On his coming to Bosra, a city on the confines of that country, while he was attending his uncle's factors in the vending of his wares in the public market-place, ¶ he was there seen (say the Mahometans) by Bahira, a learned monk of that place, who immediately knowing him to be the great Prophet that was to come, pressed with great earnestness through the crowd unto him, and taking him by the

° Geograph. Nubienfis Sionita in Append. ad eandem, c. 7. Pocockii Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 127. Golii Notæ ad Alfraganum, p. 98.

¶ Geographia Nubienfis clim. 2. Part. 5. Golii Notæ ad Alfraganum, p. 100.

¶ Abul Feda. Alkodai. Al-Jannabi. Abul Faraghius, p. 101. Pocock. Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 170. Gentii Notæ ad Mussadinum Sadum, p. 536.

hand, there foretold of him all those great things which afterwards came to pass. The mark whereby he knew him (say they) was the prophetic light, which shone on his face. This prophetic ^r light, they tell us, God first placed on Adam, to be a sign of the prophets that were to be born of him; that this light descending down to Abraham, was from him divided into two; one on the face of Isaac, and the other on the face of Ismael; that Isaac's light was soon after manifested in the many prophets which appeared of his posterity among the children of Israel; but that which was placed on Ismael was suppressed, and lay hid till the coming of Mahomet, on whom it first appeared; and that Bahira seeing it on him, thereby knew him (say they) to be a great prophet sent of God, who was ere long to manifest himself. But others ^s say, the mark by which he knew him, was the seal of his prophetic mission, stamped with a wonderful impress between his shoulders. But the truth is, Mahomet did not become acquainted with this Bahira, till many years after, when he traded for Cadigha in those parts; as shall in its proper place be hereafter related.

Till the twenty-fifth year of his age, he continued in this employment under his uncle; but ^t then one of the chief men of the city dying, and his widow, whose name was Cadigha (to whom he left all his stock, which was of considerable value) wanting a factor to manage it for her, she invited Mahomet into her service; and having offered him such advantageous conditions as he thought fit to accept of, he undertook this employment under her, and for three years traded for her at

^r Shareftani Liber de generatione & Nutritura Mahometis. Pocock. Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 53. & p. 168.

^s Gentii Notæ ad Mufladinum Sadum, p. 536. Vide etiam librum de Generatione & Nutritura Mahometis.

^t Abul Feda. Abul Faraghius, p. 102. Rodericus Toletanus, c. 2. Joannes Andreas, c. 1. Pocock. Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 171.

Damascus, and other places; and in the management of this charge gave her that content, and so far insinuated himself into her favour and good opinion thereby, that about the ^u 28th year of his age she gave herself to him in marriage, being then forty years old; and from being servant, thus advanced him to be the master both of her person and estate; which having rendered him equal in wealth to the best men of the city, his ambitious mind began to entertain thoughts of ^x possessing himself of the sovereignty over it. His ancestors had for several descents been chiefs of the tribe; and his great grandfather Hasmeh had made himself very considerable, not only at home, but also among his neighbours abroad; and had his father lived, the power and wealth of his family, after the death of his grandfather, would have descended to him, as being the eldest son; and after his decease, to himself; and it was only his misfortune in being left an orphan during the life of his grandfather, that deprived him of all this. These considerations meeting with an ambitious, aspiring mind, soon put him upon designs of raising himself to the supreme government of his country; and being a very subtle crafty man, after having maturely weighed all ways and means whereby to bring this to pass, concluded none so likely to effect it, as the framing of that imposture which he afterwards vented with so much mischief to the world. For the course of trade which he drove into Egypt, Palestine, and Syria, having made him well acquainted both ^y with Christians and Jews, and ob-

^u For she died in the 50th year of the life of Mahomet. Elmac. lib. 1. c. 1. when she had lived with him 22 years. Abul Faraghius, p. 102.

^x *Disputatio Christiani contra Saracenum*, c. 3. *Cusani Cribratio Alcorani*, lib. 3. c. 8. *Ricardi Confutatio Legis Saracenicæ*, c. 13.

^y *Disputatio Christiani*, c. 1. *Fortalit. Fid.* lib. 4. *Confid.* 1.

serving with what eagerness as well they, as the several sects into which the Christians of the East were then miserably divided, did engage against each other; he from thence concluded, that nothing would be more likely to gain a party firm to him for the compassing of his ambitious ends, than the making of a new religion. And for such a change he judged his citizens might be well disposed, because their traffic and frequent converse with Christians having much taken off their affection and zeal for that gross idolatry which they had hitherto been addicted to, they were at that time from heathenism generally fallen ^z into Zendicism, an error among the Arabs near of kin to the Sadducism of the Jews, as denying providence, the resurrection, and a future state; which being in reality to be without any religion at all, they were the better fitted, while thus void of all other impressions of God, and his worship, to receive any he should impose upon them; and therefore betaking himself to frame such a religion as he thought might best go down with them, he drew up a scheme of that imposture he afterwards deluded them with, which being a medley made up of Judaism, the several heresies of the Christians then in the East, and the old pagan rites of the Arabs, with an indulgence to all sensual delights, it did too well answer his design, in drawing men of all sorts to the embracing of it.

But that he might not immediately, from that idolatry which he had hitherto practised with the rest of his citizens, commence a preacher against it; and from his present course of life, which was very licentious and wicked, take upon him a character so unsuitable to it, as that of a prophet, without

^z Liber Almoſtatraſ. Pocockii Spec. Hiſt. Arab. p. 136. And Mahomet upbraids them with it in the 6th chapter of his Alcoran, and elſewhere in that book.

some previous change : in the 38th year of his age ^a he withdrew himself from his former conversation, and affecting an Eremitical life, used every morning to withdraw himself into a solitary cave near Metca, called the cave of Hira, and there continue all day, exercising himself, as he pretended, in prayers, fastings, and holy meditations ; and there it is supposed he first had his consults with those accomplices, by whose help he made his Alcoran. On his return home at night, he used to tell his wife Cadigha of visions which he had seen, and strange voices which he had heard in his retirement. For he aimed first of all to draw her into the imposture, knowing that thereby he should secure his own family to his design (without which it would be dangerous for him to venture on it) and also gain in her an able partizan for him among the women. But she rejecting these stories as vain fancies of his own disturbed imagination, or else delusions of the devil ; at length he opened himself further unto her, and feigned a converse with the angel Gabriel, which she was also as backward to believe, till after several repeated stories to her of his revelations from the said angel, she ^b consulted with a fugitive monk, then in their house, (of whom I shall hereafter speak) who being in the plot, helped to confirm her in the belief of what Mahomet had communicated unto her, whereby being totally persuaded that Mahomet was really called to that prophetic office which he pretended to, from thenceforth gave up her faith totally to him, and became his first profelyte in this imposture.

After he had carried this point, having now, by two years constantly practising a retired and austere life, gained, as he

^a Liber Agar. Joannes Andreas de Confusione Sectæ Mahometanæ, c. 1. Bartholomæus Edeffenus. Bellonius, lib. 3. c. 1. Guadagnol. Tract. 2. c. 10. § 1.

^b Theophanes. Cedrenus. Miscella Historia. Zonaras.

thought, a sufficient reputation of sanctity for his design : in the 40th year of his age ^c he began to take upon him the stile of the apostle of God, and under that character to propagate the imposture which he had been so long a projecting. But for four years he did it only in private among such as he had most confidence in, clancularly insinuating his delusions into them. His first profelyte, as has been said, was Cadigha, his wife ; his second was Zayd Ebn Hareth his servant ; and the third his cousin Ali, the son of Abu Taleb his uncle, who from hence was ^d used to stile himself the first of believers, not making any reckoning of the other two. ^e He tempted his servant Zayd by promising him his freedom ; and accordingly, on his receiving his religion, he manumised him. And from hence it hath become a law among the Mahometans ever since, to make their slaves free, whenever they turn to their religion.

It is to be observed, that Mahomet began this imposture about the same time that ^f the bishop of Rome, by virtue of a grant from the wicked tyrant Phocas, first assumed the title of Universal Pastor, and thereon claimed to himself that supremacy which he hath been ever since endeavouring to usurp over the church of Christ. And from this time both having conspired to found themselves an empire in imposture, their followers have been ever since endeavouring by the same methods, that is, those of fire and sword, to propagate it among mankind ; so that Antichrist seems at this time to have set both his feet upon Christendom together, the one in the East,

^c Abul Feda. Abul Faraghius, p. 102. Elmacin. lib. 1. c. 1.

^d Sionita in Append. ad Geograph. Nubiensem, c. 8.

^e Joannes Andreas, c. 1. Bellonius, lib. 3. c. 10. Guadagnol. Tract. 2. c. 10. § 1.

^f Phocas made this grant, A. D. 606. which was the very year that Mahomet retired to his cave to forge that imposture there, which, two years after, A. D. 608. he began to propagate at

and the other in the West; and how much each hath trampled upon the church of Christ, the ages ever since succeeding have abundantly experienced.

Mahomet's fourth disciple was ^g Abu Beker, who being one of the ^h richest men of Mecca, and a person of great wisdom and experience, brought with him no small help and reputation to his cause; and his example was soon followed by five others, ⁱ Othman Ebn Affan, Zobair Ebno'l Awam, Saad Ebn Abu Waccas, Abdorrahman Ebn Auf, and Abu Obeida Ebno'l Jerah, who were afterwards the principal generals of his armies, and the chief instruments under him, by whose help he established both his empire, and his imposture together in those parts of the world.

After he had gotten these nine disciples, some of which were the principal men of the city, he began ^k openly to publish his imposture to the people of Mecca in the 44th year of his age, and publicly to declare himself a prophet sent by God to reduce them from the error of paganism, and to teach them the true religion. The first doctrine that he propagated among them was, ^l that there was but one God, and that he only is to be worshipped, and that ^m all idols were to be taken away, and their worship utterly abolished; and that those who say God hath ⁿ sons or daughters, or that there are any other gods ^o associated with him, are impious, and ought to be abhorred. By denying him sons and associates, he reflected on the Christians for holding the doctrine of the Trinity, and that Jesus

^g Elmacin. lib. 1. c. 1. Abul Feda.

^h Sionita in Append. ad Geographiam Nubiensem, c. 8.

ⁱ Elmacin, lib. 1. c. 1.

^k Abul Feda. Abul Faraghius, p. 102. Elmacin. lib. 1. c. 1.

^l Elmacin. lib. 1. c. 1. Alcoran, c. 2, 3, 4, 5, &c.

^m Elmac. ib. & Alc. passim.

ⁿ Alc, c. 4. &c.

^o Alc. c. 4, 5, &c.

Christ is the Son of God ; the belief of both which he doth in many places in his Alcoran vehemently forbid. By denying him daughters, he condemned the idolatrous practice of the Arabians, ^p who worshipped Allat, Menah, and Al Uzza, female deities, which they held to be the daughters of God, whose idols and temples he afterwards every where destroyed.

He did not pretend to deliver to them any new religion, but to revive the old one, which God first gave unto Adam ; and when lost in the corruption of the old world, restored it again by revelation to ^q Abraham, who taught it his son Ismael their forefather ; and that he, when he first planted himself in Arabia, instructed men in the same religion which he had received from Abraham ; but their posterity afterwards corrupted it into idolatry, and that God had now sent him to destroy this idolatry, and again restore the religion of Ismael their forefather. And therefore, according to his own doctrine, it is not unfitly called Ismaelisme by the Jews, although they call it so only out of contempt, by transposition of the letters from Islamisme, the name whereby the Mahometans themselves most love to call it, from the Arabic ^r word Salama, which in the fourth conjugation is Aflama, *to enter into the state of salvation* ; hence Eflam, *the saving religion*, and Musslimon, or as we call it Musleman, *he that believeth therein*.

He ^s allowed both the Old and the New Testament, and that Moses and Jesus Christ were prophets sent from God ; but that the Jews and Christians had corrupted these holy writings, and that he was sent to purge them from these corruptions, and restore the law of God to that purity in which

^p Pocockii Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 89, 90. Hottingeri Hist. Orient. lib. 1. c. 7.

^q Pocockii Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 53. Alc. c. 3. &c.

^r Golii. Lexic. in voce Salama, & Pocockius ubi supra.

^s Alc. c. 3, 4, 5, &c.

it was first delivered; and therefore most of those passages which he takes out of the Old and New Testament, are related otherwise by him in his Alcoran, than we have them in those sacred books. And in this certainly he acted much wiser than our Socinians, who, with him denying the holy Trinity and the divinity of our Saviour, yet still allow the holy Scriptures, as now in our hands, to be genuine and uncorrupted, with which their doctrine is in the most manifest manner totally inconsistent. If they had with this their master denied the scriptures which we now have, as well as Trinity, and the divinity of our Saviour, which are so evidently proved by them, and forged others in their stead, they might have made their impious hypothesis look much more plausible, than now it can possibly appear to be.

He pretended to receive all his revelations ^u from the angel Gabriel, and that he was sent from God on purpose to deliver them unto him. And whereas he was subject to the falling sickness, ^x whenever the fit was upon him, he pretended it to be a trance, and that then the angel Gabriel was come from God with some new revelations unto him, the splendor of whose appearance he not being able to bear, this caused him to fall into those trances, in which the angel conversed with him, and delivered to him those messages from God, which he was sent to reveal unto him.

^{*} The Socinians say just the same, and no more of Jesus Christ, than Mahomet did before them, excepting only that he makes himself the greater of the two; and how many other things they agree in with him, and seem to have taken from him, may be seen in Hottinger's *Historia Orientalis*, lib. 2. c. 3. where he fully compares the doctrines of both together.

^u Alc. c. 2. Joan. Andreas. c. 2. Guadagnol, *Traët.* 2. c. 10. § 1. Liber Agar.

^x Rodericus Toletanus, c. 6. Ricardi *Confutatio*, c. 13. Theophanes. Zonaras. *Miscel. Historia.* Hottingeri *Hist. Orient.* lib. 1. c. 2. *Fortalitium Fidei*, lib. 4. *Confid.* 2.

His pretended revelations he put into several chapters, the collection of which make up his Alcoran, which is the Bible of the Mahometans. The original of this book he taught them ¹ was laid up in the archives of heaven, and that the angel Gabriel brought him ² the copy of it chapter by chapter, according as occasion required they should be published to the people. Part of these he published at Mecca, before his flight from thence; and the other part at Medina, which he did after this manner. ³ When he had forged a new chapter, which he intended to publish, he first dictated it to his secretary, and then delivered the written paper to be read to his followers till they had learned it by heart; which being done, he had the paper brought to him again, which he laid up in a chest, which he called the chest of his apostleship. This he did, I suppose, in imitation of the ark or holy chest among the Jews, in which the authentic copy of their law was repositied. This chest he left in the keeping of Haphsa, one of his wives, and out of it, after his death, was the Alcoran compiled, in the same manner as Homer's Rhapsodies were out of the loose poems of that Poet. Abu Beker, who succeeded the Impostor, first made the collection.

^b For when Mofailema, who in the last year of Mahomet set up for a prophet as well as he, had, in hopes of the same success, in like manner composed an Alcoran, and published it in a book to his followers (as shall hereafter be related) Abu Beker thought it necessary to publish Mahomet's also in the same manner, and that not only in opposition to the new im-

¹ Alc. c. 6. & c. 80.

² Alc. c. 25.

³ Joannes Andreas, c. 2.

^b Elmacin. lib. 1. c. 2. Abul Feda. Pocock. Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 362. Bartholomæus Edeffenus. Golii præfatio at Suratatam. Locman. Hinckelman. præfatio ad Alcoranum. Joannes Andreas, c. 2. Ricardi Confut. c. 13.

posture, but also for the better supporting of that which he adhered to; and therefore having recourse to Haphsa's chest, partly out of the papers which he found there, and partly out of the memory of those who had learned them by heart, when the Impostor first delivered them unto them, he composed the book. For several of those papers being lost, and others so defaced as not to be read, he was forced to take in the assistance of those who pretended to remember what the Impostor had taught them, to make up the matter, and under this pretence made use of their advice to frame the book, as he thought would best answer his purpose. When the work was completed, he caused the original to be laid up in the same chest, out of which he had compiled it, which he still continued in the keeping of Haphsa, and then delivered out copies of it among his followers. But the book had not been long published, but so many various readings were got into the copies, and so many absurdities discovered in the book itself, that ^c when Othman came to be Caliph, he found it necessary to call it in again to be licked into a better shape; and therefore having commanded all to bring in their copies, under pretence of correcting them by the original in the keeping of Haphsa, he caused them all to be burned, and then published that Alcoran a-new modelled by him, which we have, of which having ordered four copies to be written out fair, he deposited the first of them at Mecca, and the second at Medina; the third he sent into Erack, or Chaldæa, and the fourth into Syria. The three first were after a while all lost, but the last of them several ages after ^d was said to be preserved at Damascus in a mosque there, which had formerly been the church of St.

^c Eutyech. Tom. 2. p. 340. Abul Feda. Pococ. ib. Disputatio Christiani, c. 15. Joannes Andreas, c. 2.

^d Bartholomæus Edessenus, p. 423.

John the Baptist. This ^e was done in the 32d year of the Hegira, An. 652. twenty-one years after the death of the Impostor; after which time the book underwent no other correction.

On his first appearing publicly as a prophet, ^f the people laughed at him for the ridiculousness of his pretence; some called him a ^g forcerer, and a magician, others a liar, an impostor, and a teller of old fables; of which he often complains in his Alcoran; so that for the first year he prevailed nothing among them, or got any thing else by his publishing those chapters of his Alcoran which he had then composed, or his preaching to them the doctrine of them, but scorn and contempt. But this did not discourage him from still proceeding in his design, which he managed with great art. For he was a man of a ^h ready wit, and a very acceptable address; he bore all affronts, without seeming to resent any; and applied himself to all sorts of people, without contemning the meanest; was very courteous both in giving and receiving visits; the great men he soothed with flattering praises, and the poor he relieved with gifts and alms; and towards all men managed himself with that art of insinuation (in which he exceeded all men living) that at length he surmounted all the difficulties, which so bold an imposture in the first venting of it must necessarily be liable unto; and several other new proselytes joined themselves unto him, among whom was ⁱ Omar Ebno'l Chat-tab, who was one of his successors, and then a considerable man in the city. His example was soon followed by several

^e Eutychius, Tom. 2. p. 340.

^f Joannes Andreas, c. 1.

^g Alc. c. 15, 25, 37, 81, &c.

^h Elmacin, lib. 1. c. 1. Abunazar. Hottinger. Hist. Orient. lib. 2. c. 4.

ⁱ Elmacin, lib. 1. cap. 1. Joannes Andreas, c. 1.

others; so that in the fifth year of his pretended mission, he had increased his party to the number of nine and thirty, and himself made the fortieth.

On his having made this progress, ^{*} several began to be alarmed at it. Those that were addicted to the idolatry of their forefathers, stood up to oppose him as an enemy of their gods, and a dangerous innovator in their religion. But others, who saw further into his designs, thought it time to put a stop thereto, for the sake of the public safety of the government, which it manifestly tended to undermine for the establishing of tyranny over them, and therefore they combining together against him, intended to have cut him off with the sword. But [†] Abu Taleb, his uncle, getting notice hereof, defeated the design, and by his power, as being chief of the tribe, preserved him from all other like attempts as were afterwards framed against him. For although he himself persisted in the paganism of his ancestors, yet he had that affection for the Impostor, as being his kinsman, and one that was bred up in his house, that he firmly stood by him against all his enemies, and would suffer no one to do him any hurt as long as he lived. And therefore being safe under so powerful a protection, he boldly went on to preach to the people in all public places of the city where they used to assemble, and published unto them more chapters of his Alcoran, in the order, as he pretended, they were brought him by the angel Gabriel. The chief subject of which was to press upon them the observance of some moral duties, the belief of the unity of God, and the dignity of his own pretended apostleship, in which indeed, besides some heathen and Jewish rites which he retained, consisted the whole of his new forged religion.

^{*} Elmacin, lib. 1. c. 1. Joannes Andreas, c. 1.

[†] Elmacin, *ibid.*

The main arguments he made use of to delude men into this imposture, were his promises and his threats, as being those which easiest work on the affections of the vulgar. His promises were chiefly of paradise, which he so cunningly framed to the gust of the Arabians, as to make it totally consist in those pleasures which they were most delighted with: For they being within the Torrid Zone, were, through the nature of the climate, as well as the excessive corruption of their manners,^m exceedingly given to the love of women; and the scorching heat and dryness of the country making rivers of water, cooling drinks, shaded gardens, and pleasant fruits, most refreshing and delightful unto them; they were from hence apt to place their highest enjoyment in things of this nature. And therefore, to answer the height of their carnal desires, he made the joys of heaven, which he proposed for a reward to all those that should believe in him, to consist totally in these particulars. For he tells them in many places in his Alcoran, ' that they shall enter into pleasant gardens, ⁿ where ' many rivers flow, and many curious fountains continually ' send forth most pleasing streams, nigh which they shall repose themselves on most delicate beds adorned with gold and ' precious stones, under the shadow of the trees of paradise, ' which shall continually yield them all manner of delicious ' fruits; and that there they shall enjoy most beautiful women, ' pure and clean, having black eyes, and a countenance always ' fresh and white as polished pearls, who shall not cast an eye ' on any other but themselves, with whom they shall enjoy the

^m Ammianus Marcellinus de Saracenis, lib. 14. c. 4. Incredibile est quo ardore apud eos in Venerem uterque dissolvitur sextus.

ⁿ Alcoran, c. 3. c. 4. c. 36. c. 37. c. 43. c. 47. c. 78. c. 90, &c. Joannes Andreas, c. 9. Ricardi Confut. c. 8. Cantacuzenus Orat. 2. § 11. Hottingeri Hist. Orient. l. 2. c. 4. Pocockii Miscellanea, c. 7. Disputatio Christiani. a. 26, & 28. Bellonius lib. 3. c. 9.

‘ continual pleasures of love, and solace themselves in their
 ‘ company with amorous delights to all eternity, drinking
 ‘ with them most delicious liquors, and most savoury and plea-
 ‘ sant wines, without being ever intoxicated or overcharged
 ‘ by them, which shall be administered to them by beautiful
 ‘ boys, who shall be continually running round their beds to
 ‘ serve them up unto them in cups of gold, and glasses fixed
 ‘ on diamonds.’ And as thus he framed his promises of re-
 ward in the life hereafter, as might best suit with the sensual
 appetites and desires of those to whom he proposed them; so,
 on the contrary, he described the punishment of hell, which
 he threatened to all that would not believe in him, to consist
 of such torments as would appear to them the most afflicting
 and grievous to be borne. ‘ As ° that they should drink no-
 ‘ thing but boiling and stinking water, nor breathe any thing
 ‘ else but exceeding hot winds,’ (things most terrible in Ara-
 bia) ‘ that they should dwell for ever in continual fire exces-
 ‘ sively burning, and be surrounded with a black hot and salt
 ‘ smoke, as with a coverlid; that they should eat nothing but
 ‘ briars and thorns, and the fruits of the tree Zacon, which
 ‘ should be in their bellies like burning pitch.’ In the propos-
 ing of these promises and threats to the people he was very
 frequent and sedulous, making them to ring in their ears on
 all occasions, whereby he failed not of his end in alluring some,
 and affrighting others into the snare he laid for them.

And that he might omit nothing whereby to work on their
 fear, which is usually the most prevalent passion of the igno-
 rant, he terrified them with the threats of grievous punish-
 ments in this life, as well as in that which is to come, if they
 would not hearken unto him. And to this end ^p he did set

° Alcoran, c. 7. c. 37. c. 43. c. 44. c. 47. c. 50. c. 74. c. 77.
 c. 78. c. 90, &c.

^p Alc. c. 6. c. 7. c. 11, &c. Joannes Andreas, c. 12.

forth unto them on all occasions, what terrible destructions had fallen upon the heads of such as would not be instructed by the prophets, that were sent before him. How the old world was destroyed by water, for not being reformed at the preaching of Noah; and Sodom by fire from heaven, for not hearkening to Lot when sent unto them. How the Egyptians were plagued for despising Moses; and how Ad and Thamod, two ancient tribes of the Arabs, were totally extirpated for the same reason. His stories of the two last were fables of his own invention, which he related unto them after this manner; that ^a Ad the grandson of Aram, the son of Sem, planted himself after the confusion of languages in the Southern parts of Arabia, where his posterity falling into idolatry, the prophet Hud (whom the commentators on the Alcoran will have to be Heber) was sent unto them to reclaim them unto the true worship; but they not hearkening unto him, God sent a violent hot wind, which in seven days time destroyed them all, excepting only the prophet, and some few who were reformed by him. As to Thamod, his ^r story was, that they were an ancient tribe of the Arabs, dwelling on the confines of Syria, and that on their revolt to idolatry, God sent to them the prophet Saleh; that on their demand of a miracle to testify his mission, he caused a rock to bring forth a camel in the sight of them all; that they notwithstanding in contempt wounded the camel, and that thereupon God sent terrible thunders, which in three days time destroyed them all, excepting Saleh, and some few who believed on him. And the like fable he also told them of ^s Chaib, another prophet of the ancient Arabs, sent to the tribe of Madian, and how

^a Alc. c. 7. c. 11, &c. Pocockii Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 37.

^r Alcoran, c. 7. c. 11. c. 26, &c. Pocockii Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 37. Hott. Hist. Orient. lib. 1. c. 3.

^s Alc. c. 7. c. 11. c. 26, &c.

that tribe was in like manner destroyed by thunder, for not hearkening unto him. For the sake of these stories (which he was very frequent in inculcating into the people, and very often repeats in his Alcoran) those who believed not on him, called him 'a teller of old fables,' but notwithstanding, they wrought upon the fears of others, and by this and other such artifices, he still went on to increase his party, to which two of his uncles, ^u Hamza and Al Abbas, at length joined themselves. But the rest of his uncles approved not of his designs, and although Abu Taleb still continued to befriend him, because of the affection which he bore him, the other nine had not this regard to him, but joined with his enemies, and opposed him all they could, as a man that under the false mask which he had put on, carried on dangerous designs to the prejudice of his country.

But that which gruelled him most, was, that his opposers demanded to see a miracle from him. 'For' said they, ^x 'Moses and Jesus, and the rest of the prophets, according to thy own doctrine, worked miracles to prove their mission from God; and therefore if thou be a prophet, and greater than any that were sent before thee, as thou boastest thyself to be,' do thou work the like miracles to manifest it unto us. 'Do thou make the dead to rise, the dumb to speak, and the deaf to hear; or else do thou cause fountains to spring out of the earth, and make this place a garden adorned with vines and palm-trees, and watered with rivers running through it into divers channels; or else let us see come down from heaven some of those punishments which thou threatenest us with. Or do thou make thee an house of gold, adorned with jewels and costly furniture; or let us see the

^t Alcoran, c. 25, &c.

^u Joannes Andreas, c. 1.

^x Alcoran, c. 2. c. 6, &c. Bidawi ad Alcorani cap. 12.

^y Alcoran, c. 17, &c.

‘book thou wouldest have us believe to come from heaven, ‘descend down to us from thence legible in our eyes, or the ‘angel which thou tellest us doth bring it unto thee, and then ‘we will believe in thy word.’ This objection he endeavoured to evade by several answers. One ^z while he tells them, he is only a man sent to preach to them the rewards of paradise, and the punishments of hell. At another time, ^a that their predecessors contemned the miracles of Saleh, and the other prophets, and that for this reason God would work no more among them. And a while after, that those ^b whom God had ordained to believe, should believe without miracles, and those whom he had not ordained to believe, should not be convinced, though all those miracles should be wrought in their sight, which they required; and that therefore they were totally needless. But this not satisfying, as being a plain confession that he wanted that power of miracles, which all other prophets had to prove their mission, several of those that were his followers departed from him, of which he much complains in his Alcoran. And therefore finding that this would not do, on his coming to Medina, and having there taken the sword in hand, and gotten an army to back his cause, he began to sing another note. For his doctrine then was, ^c that God had sent Moses and Jesus with miracles, and yet men would not be obedient to their word; and therefore he had now sent him in the last place without miracles, to force them by the power of the sword to do his will: and pursuant hereto ^d he forbade his disciples to enter into any further disputes about his religion; but instead thereof he commanded them to fight for it, and destroy all those who should contradict his law,

^z Alcoran, c. 17.

^a Alc. ib.

^b Alcoran, c. 6.

^c Richardi Confutatio, c. 7. Cantacuzeni Apologia, 4. & Orat. 1. § 11. Alcoran, c. 2. c. 3. c. 4, &c.

^d Alc. c. 4. Cantacuzeni Orat. 1. § 12.

promising great rewards in the life to come, to such as should take up the sword in this cause, and the crown of martyrdom to all those who should die fighting for it. And upon this head, some of the Mahometan doctors argue very subtilly. For ^e say they, the prophets of God are of divers sorts, according to the divers attributes of his divine nature, which they are sent to shew forth. That Jesus Christ was sent to manifest the righteousness, the power and knowledge of God ; that he shewed forth the righteousness of God in being impeccable ; his knowledge, in that he knew the secrets of mens hearts, and foretold things to come ; and his power, in doing those miraculous works which none else but God could. That Solomon was sent to manifest the wisdom, the glory, and the majesty of God ; and Moses, his providence, and his clemency : none of which carrying with them a power to force men to believe, miracles were necessary in their missions to induce them thereunto. But Mahomet was a prophet, sent principally to shew forth the fortitude of God by the power of the sword, which being of itself alone sufficient to compel all men into the faith, without any other power accompanying it, for this reason, say they, Mahomet wrought no miracles, because he had no need of them, the power of the sword, with which he was sent, of itself alone sufficiently enabling him to accomplish his mission, for forcing men to believe therein. And from hence it hath become the universal doctrine of the Mahometans, that their religion is to be propagated by the sword, and that all of them are bound to fight for it. And for this reason ^f it hath been a custom among them for their preachers, while they deliver their sermons, to have a drawn sword placed by them, to denote thereby, that the doctrine which

^e Ahmed Ebn. Zin. Guadagnol, Tract. 2. c. 10. § 11.

^f Cantacuzeni Orat. § 11. Guadagnol, Tract. 2. c. 5. § 3.

they teach them, was with the sword to be defended and propagated by them.

However, it is not to be denied, but that there are several miracles reckoned up, which Mahomet ^g is said to have wrought; as, that he did cleave the moon in two; that trees went forth to meet him; that water flowed from between his fingers; that the stones saluted him; that he fed a great company with a little food; that a bean groaned at him; that a camel complained to him; that a shoulder of mutton told him of its being poisoned; and several others. But those who relate them, are only such who are reckoned among their fabulous and legendary writers. Their learned ^h doctors renounce them all, as doth Mahomet himself, who in several places in his ⁱ Alcoran owns that he wrought no miracles. But when they are pressed how without miracles they can prove his mission, their common answer is; that instead of all miracles is the Alcoran. For ^k that Mahomet, who was an illiterate person, that could neither write nor read, or that any man else by human wisdom alone should be able to compose a book so excellent in eloquence, and so excellent in doctrine, as they will have that to be, is what they will not admit to be possible; and therefore they allege the excellency of the book for the truth of all contained therein, and will have that to be a proof equivalent to the miracles of all the prophets that went before him, to manifest that it came from God.

^g Abul Pharaghius, p. 104. Pocockii Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 187, & 188. Hottinger. Hist. Orient. lib. 2. c. 6. Guadagnol, Tract. 2. c. 2. § 2.

^h Abul Pharaghius, p. 104. Pocockii Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 191, 192, &c. Hottinger. Hist. Orient. lib. 2. c. 6.

ⁱ Alc. c. 6, &c.

^k Al Gazali. Sepher Cozri. Bidawi. Ahmed Ebn Edris. Hottinger. Hist. Orient. lib. 2. c. 6. Pocockii Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 191, 192, &c.

And on this ¹ the Impostor himself often insists in his Alcoran, challenging in several places of it all men and devils by their united skill to compose another book like that in eloquence and instruction, or else any one chapter that can be compared in excellency with the meanest chapter therein: which they taking for granted that both together cannot do, will have this to be a most clear manifestation beyond all contradiction, that this book could come from none other but God himself, and that Mahomet from whom they received it, was his messenger to bring it unto them.

As to the particulars in this argument alleged, it must be allowed, that the Alcoran, bating the folly, the confusedness and incoherency of the matter contained therein, is as to the stile and language the standard of elegancy in the Arab tongue; and as to Mahomet, that he was in truth, what they say, an illiterate barbarian ^m that could neither write nor read. But this was not so much a defect in him, as in the tribe of which he was, with whom it was the custom as to all manner of literature, to continue ⁿ in the same ignorance with which they came out of their mothers bellies, unto their lives end. And therefore at the time when Mahomet first set up for a prophet, there was not any one man of Mecca that could either write or read, excepting only ^o Warakah, a kinsman of Cadigha's, who having first turned Jew, and afterwards Christian, had learned to write Arabic in Hebrew letters. And for this reason the men of Mecca were called ^p the *illiterate*, in oppo-

¹ Alcoran, c. 2. c. 10. c. 17, &c.

^m Alc. c. 7. Joannes Andreas, c. 2. Pocockii Spec. Hist. Arab. 156. Disputatio Christiani, c. 12. Richardi Confutatio, c. 3.

ⁿ Ebnol Athir Shareftani. Al. Motarrezii in libro Mogreb. Pocock. Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 157.

^o Al. Bochari. Pocock. ib.

^p Shareftani. Pocock. Spec. Arab. Hist. p. 156.

sition to the people of Medina, who being the one half Christians, and the other half Jews, were able both to write and read; and therefore were called ^a the *people of the book*. And from them several of Mahomet's followers, after he came to Medina, learned to read and write also, which some of them had begun to learn before of Bashtar the Cendian ^t who having sojourned at Anbar, a city of Erack, near Euphrates, there learned the art; from whence coming to Mecca, and marrying the sister of Abusophian, he settled there, and from him the men of Mecca are first said to have received the art of letters. Among the followers of Mahomet, Othman was the greatest proficient herein, which advanced him afterwards to ^u be secretary to the Impostor. But for want of paper at first, as in a place where there was never before any occasion for it, they were forced to make use ^v of the spade-bones of shoulders of mutton, and of shoulders of camels, to write on; which was a device anciently made use of by other tribes of the Arabs, who had letters, but wanted traffick to accommodate them with more convenient materials for this purpose; and therefore their books in which their poems, and other matters they delighted in were written, ^w were only so many of those spade-bones tied together upon a string. This Bashtar afterwards became one of Mahomet's disciples, and followed him in his wars, till poisoned at Chaibar, as shall be hereafter related.

But these particulars being thus allowed, that the Alcoran of the Mahometans is of so elegant stile, and the supposed author thereof such a rude and illiterate barbarian; it will be here asked, who were the assistants by whose help this book

^a Shareftani & Pocock. ib. Hottin. Hist. Orient. lib. 1. c. 1.

^t Pocockii Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 157.

^u Elmacin, lib. 1. c. 1. Bartholomæus Edeffenus.

^v Pocockii Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 157.

^w Ebnol Athir. Pocock. ib.

was compiled, and the imposture framed? And there will be the more reason to ask this, because the book itself contains so many particulars of the Jewish and Christian religion, as necessarily imply the authors of it to be well skilled in both; which Mahomet, who was bred an idolater, and lived so for the first forty years of his life, among a people totally illiterate, cannot be supposed to be. But this is a question not so easily to be answered, because the nature of the thing required it should be concealed. The Mahometan writers, who believed in the Impostor, as they will allow nothing of this, so to be sure will say little of it, and the Christians who abhorred his wickedness, are apt to say too much. For it was usual with them, as it is with all other contending parties, to snatch at every story which would disparage the religion they were against, and believe it right or wrong, if it would serve their purpose this way. And from hence it hath proceeded, that we have so many fabulous and ridiculous accounts, both of Mahomet and his imposture, go current among us, which serve only to the exposing of us to the laughter of the Mahometans, when related among them. And besides, the scene of this imposture being at least six hundred miles within the country of Arabia, amidst those barbarous nations, who all immediately embraced it, and would not afterward permit any of another religion, so much as to live among them; it could not at that distance be so well searched into by those who were most concerned to discover the frauds of it, and therefore an exact account cannot be expected in this particular. However, that I may give all the satisfaction herein, that I am able, I shall here lay together whatsoever I can find in any credible author concerning it, and give the best judgment hereof, that the matter will admit.

That Mahomet composed his Alcoran by the help of others, was a thing well known at Mecca, when he first broached his

imposture there, and it was often flung in his teeth by his opposers, as he himself more than once complaineth. In the 25th chapter of the Alcoran, his words are; ‘they say, that ‘the Alcoran is nothing but a lie of thy own invention, and ‘others have been assisting to thee herein.’ Where the commentators say, the persons here meant, ^x were the servants of a certain sword-smith at Mecca, who were Christians, with whom Mahomet was used often to converse for the better informing of himself from them in the Old and New Testament. And from hence it is, that ^y Bellonius tells us, that Mahomet found at Mecca two Christians, who had with them copies of the Old and New Testament, and that he was much helped by them in the composing of his Alcoran. But this is too open work for so secret a design. ‘They that upbraided him with his being assisted by others, meant not those whom he publicly conversed with, but the private confederates, whom he secretly made use of at home, in the framing of the whole imposture, and the writing for him that book, which he pretended was brought to him from heaven by the angel Gabriel. And what he hath in another place of his Alcoran, doth particularly point at one of those, who was then looked upon to have had a principal hand in this matter. For in the sixteenth chapter his words are; ‘I know they will say, that a man ‘hath taught him the Alcoran; but whom they presume to ‘have taught him is a Persian by nation, and speaketh the ‘Persian language. But the Alcoran is in the Arabic tongue, ‘full of instruction and eloquence.’ Now, who this Persian was, Friar Richard, in his Confutation of the Mahometan Law, helps us to understand. For in his thirteenth chapter

^x Liber Agar. Guadagnol, Tract. c. 10. § 1. Joannes Andreas de Confusione Sectæ Mahometanz, c. 1.

^y Lib. 3. c. 2.

of that tract he tells us, that Mahomet being an illiterate person, he had for his helper in the forging of his imposture, among others, one Abdia Ben Salon, a Persian Jew, whose name he afterwards changed, to make it correspond with the Arabic dialect, into ^a Abdollah Ebn Salem : and Cantacuzenus, and Cardinal Cusa say the same thing. And ^a most others that write of this imposture, make mention of him as the chief architect made use of by Mahomet in the framing of it. And that he was the Persian pointed at in this passage of the Alcoran I have last mentioned, the same Friar Richard in the sixth chapter of the same tract expressly telleth us. And he is the same person whom Elmacinus calleth ^b Salman the Persian, who by his skill in drawing an intrenchment at the battle of the Ditch, saved Mahomet and all his army, where otherwise he must have necessarily been overpowered by the number of his enemies, and totally ruined. For he was a very cunning crafty fellow, and so thoroughly skilled in all the learning of the Jews, that he had commenced ^c Rabbi among them. And therefore from him Mahomet seems to have received whatsoever of the rites and customs of the Jews he hath ingrafted into his religion. For this making a very considerable part of it, and many of the particulars being drawn from the abstruser parts of the Talmudic learning, this necessarily shews so able an helper to have been in the whole contrivance. And what Johannes Andreas, an Alfacki, or a doctor of the Mahometan

^a *Abdiah* is the same in Hebrew that *Abdollah* is in Arabic, *i. e.* the servant of God, and *Ben* the same with *Ebn*, *i. e.* the Son.

^b Shickardi Taric in Proœmio, p. 54. Forbesius Instruēt. Hist. Theolog. lib. 4. c. 3. Spanhemius in Introductione ad Hist. Ecclesiast. ad § 7. c. 6.

^c Bidawi, an eminent commentator on the Alcoran, says, ‘ the Persian meant in the place above mentioned to have helped Mahomet, was Salman.’

^c *Dialogus inter Mahometem & Abdollam.*

law, turned Christian, writes of him, further clears this matter. ^d For he tells us from authentic testimonies of the Arab writers, in which he was thoroughly versed, that this Abdollah Ebn Salem (whom he, or rather his interpreter, corruptly calls Abdala Celen) was for ten years together the person by whose hand all the pretended revelations of the Impostor were first written, and therefore no doubt he was a principal contriver in the forging of them. There is extant in the end of the Latin Alcoran, published by Bibliander, a tract translated out of Arabic into Latin by Hermanus Dalmata, which by way of dialogue between Mahomet and this Abdollah, lays before us a great many of the fooleries of the Mahometan religion; which tract helps us to correct the name which is in Friar Richard's tract very corruptly written, as being only a translation at the third hand. For that tract of Friar Richard's which we now have, is no other than a translation from the Greek copy of Demetrius Cydonius, who translated it into that language, for the use of the emperor Cantacuzenus, from the original Latin which is now lost.

Besides this Jew, the Impostor had also a Christian monk for his assistant; and the many particulars in his Alcoran relating to the Christian religion, plainly prove him to have had such an helper. Theophanes, Zonaras, Cedrenus, Anastasius, and the author of the *Historia Miscella*, tell us of him, without giving him any other name than that of a Nestorian monk. But the author of the *Disputation against a Mahometan*, which is epitomized in Vincentius Bellovacensi's *Speculum Historicum*, and from thence printed at the end of Bibliander's Latin Alcoran, ^e calls him Sergius; and from thence is it, that he hath been ever since so often spoken of by that name among the Western writers. But in the East he is totally

^d De Confusione Sectæ Mahometanæ, c. 2.

^e C. 13.

unknown by it, he being never, as much as I can find, made mention of by that name by any of their writers. For all there that speak of this monk, call him Bahira; and Friar Richard, ^f who in the year of our Lord 1210, went to Bagdad on purpose to search into the mystery of Mahometism, by reading their books, and on his return wrote that judicious Confutation of it, which I have afore-mentioned ^g tells us of this Bahira as an assistant to Mahomet in the forging of his imposture; and so doth also ^h Cantacuzenus, Bartholemæus Edeffenus, and the other Greek author of the Confutation of Mahomet, published by Le Moyne: but not one of them says any thing of Sergius, so that it is plain ⁱ that Sergius and Bahira are only two different names of the same person. He was a monk of Syria, of the sect of the Nestorians. The Mahometans will have it, that he first took notice of Mahomet, while a boy, after that prophetic manner as is before related; but according to that account he would have been too old to act his part in this imposture so many years after. The truth of the matter is, Mahomet did not fall acquainted with him till a long while after, when he was projecting his wicked design in his head, in order to the better forming of which, being very desirous to acquaint himself with the Jewish and Christian religions, he was very inquisitive in examining into them, as he met with those that could inform him. And in one of his journeys into Syria, either at Bosra ^k as some say, or ^l at Jerusalem as others, lighting on this Bahira, and receiving great satisfaction from him in many of those points, which he

^f Cantacuzeni Orat. 1. contra Mahometem.

^g Cap. 6. & c. 13.

^h Orat. 1. contra Mahometem.

ⁱ Ecchelenfis Hist. Arab. Part 1. c. 6.

^k Abul Pharaghius. Abul Feda: Al Kodai. Al Jannabi.

^l Georgius Monachus in Disputatione cum Abufalama.

desired to be informed in, did thereon contract a particular friendship with him. And therefore not long after, ^m this monk for some great crime being excommunicated, and expelled his monastery, fled to Mecca to him; and being there entertained in his house, became his assistant in the framing of that imposture, which he afterwards vented, and continued with him ever after; till at length the Impostor having no farther occasion of him, to secure the secret, ⁿ put him to death. If Sergius were the name which he had in his monastery, Bahira was that which he afterwards assumed in Arabia, and by which he hath ever since been mentioned in those Eastern parts, by all that there write or speak of him. The ^o word in the Arabic language signifieth a *camel*, which, after some extraordinary merit, according to the usage of the ancient Arabs, had his ears slit, and was turned forth from the rest of the herd, at free pasture, to work no more. And no doubt this monk having told the tale of his expulsion from his monastery so much to his advantage, as to make it believed at Mecca to be drawn upon him by that which was reckoned there as meritorious, had from thence this name given him, as suiting that notion which they had of his condition among them.

As to his other helpers, if he had any such, what is said of them is so uncertain, and that so little, as is not material here to relate. We may suppose from the very nature of the design (it being to impose a cheat upon mankind) that he made as few as possible conscious to it; and the two above mentioned

^m Theophanes, Zonaras, Richardi Confutatio, c. 13. Fortalicium Fidei lib. 4. Confid. 1.

ⁿ Richardi Confutatio, c. 13. Confutatio Mahometis Gr. Edita per Le Moyne.

^o Golii Lexicon. Arab. Pocockii Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 330. Hottin. Hist. Orient. lib. 1. c. 7.

being sufficient for his purpose, it doth not appear likely that he admitted any more into the secret of it. Neither indeed is there any more room in it for another to act. For his religion being made up of three parts, whereof one was borrowed from the Jews, another from the Christians, and the third from the heathen Arabs, Abdollah furnished the first of them, Bahira the second, and Mahomet himself the last; so that there was no need of any other help to complete the imposture.

I know there are many other particulars go current of this matter, both as to the coining of the forgery, and also the manner of the first propagating of it; as that the Impostor ^p taught a bull to bring him the Alcoran on his horns, in a public assembly, as if it had this way been sent to him from God; that he bred up pigeons to come to his ears, to make show thereby, as if the Holy Ghost conversed with him; and many other such stories, which being without any foundation or likelihood of truth, I pass them over as idle fables, not to be credited; although I find some very great men have been too easy to swallow them; as particularly ^q Scaliger, ^r Grotius, and ^s Sionita, have that of the pigeons. Such tricks as these would have been easily seen through by the Arabians, they being men naturally of as subtle and acute parts as any in the world. And therefore Mahomet never so much as offered at any thing of this nature among them; but disclaiming all miracles, thereby avoided the necessity of hazarding his design upon any such open cheats, where it would be so liable to be totally blasted by a discovery. The whole of this imposture was a thing of extraordinary craft, carried on with all the cunning

^p In præfatione ad Disputationem Christiani. Purchas Pilgrimage, lib. 3. c. 3. Fortalit. Fid. lib. 4. Confid. 3.

^q In notis ad Sphæram Manilii.

^r De veritate Christianæ Religionis, lib. 6. c. 5.

^s In Appendice ad Geographiam Nubiensem, c. 7.

and caution imaginable. The framing of the Alcoran (wherein lay the main of the cheat) was all contrived at home in as secret a manner as possible, and nothing hazarded abroad, but the success of preaching it to the people. And in doing of this, no art or cunning was wanting to make it as effectual to the end designed as possible: and therefore whatever stories are told of this matter, that are inconsistent with such a management, we may assure ourselves are nothing else but fables foolishly invented by some zealous Christians to blast the imposture, which needed no such means for its confutation.

But to go on with the series of our history: in the eighth year of his pretended mission, his party growing formidable at Mecca, the ^t city passed a decree, whereby they forbade any more to join themselves unto him. But this availed nothing to his hurt, as long as his uncle Abu Taleb lived. But ^u he dying within two years after, and the chief government of the city, on his death, falling into the hands of Abu Sophian, of the house of Ommia, then one of his most violent opposers, his enemies laid hold of this advantage to renew their opposition against him, and prosecuted it with that success, that they soon put a stop to the further progress of his imposture at Mecca. For their party, after he had now lost his protector, and they became thus headed against him, soon grew to that strength, and appeared with that violence on all occasions to oppose his designs, that for fear of them no more new proselytes durst join themselves unto him; and many of those who had afore declared for him, having done it for no other end, but to join with a party where they thought they might best make their interest, as soon as they saw the hopes which they had of his prevailing, to be again blasted by this opposition, which they judged too strong for him to weather, again drew

^t Elmacin. lib. 1. c. 1.

^u Elmacin. ibid.

back and appeared no more with him. And therefore Mahomet seeing his hopes of carrying his design at Mecca thus in a manner totally crushed, began to look abroad where else he might fix. That which he drove at, was to have gained such a party there, as might be strong enough to overpower the rest, and subject the whole city to him; and then, after having possessed himself of such a post, from thence to have armed his disciples for the gaining him that empire over the rest of the Arabs, which he projected. And to this purpose was it, that he so often inculcated it into them, that his doctrine was to be propagated by the sword, and that all that would receive the faith which he preached, must fight for it. But now seeing no likelihood of accomplishing this at Mecca, he set his thoughts on work how to gain some other town, where to arm his party for this design. And therefore his uncle Abbas living most an end at ^x Tayif, (another town of Hagiaz, at sixty miles distance from Mecca towards the east) and having a great interest there ^y he took a journey thither, under his wing to propagate his imposture in that place, in order to the making of himself master of it. But after a month's stay, having not been able, with all his endeavour to gain so much as one profelyte among them, he again returned to Mecca to make the best of his party there, and wait such farther advantages as time and opportunity might offer him for the accomplishing of what he designed. And now Cadigha, his wife, being ^z dead, after she had lived two and twenty years with him; to strengthen himself the more, he took two other wives

^x For which reason it hath been ever since, even to this day, called *Abbas Beladi*, i. e. *the town of Abbas*, Golii Notæ ad Alfraganum, p. 100.

^y Elmacin. lib. 1. c. 1.

^z Elmacin. Abul Pharaghius. Abul Feda, &c.

in her stead, ^a Ayefha, the daughter of Abu Beker; and Sewda, the daughter of Zama; and a while after he added to them ^b Haphsa, the daughter of Omar; whereby making himself son-in-law to three of the principal men of his party, he did by that alliance the more firmly tie them to his interest. Ayefha was then ^c but six years old, and therefore he did not bed her till two years after, when she was full eight years old. For it is usual in those hot countries, ^d as it is all India over, which is in the same clime with Arabia, for women to be ripe for marriage at that age, and also bear children the year following.

In the twelfth year of his pretended mission, is placed the *Mesra*, that is, his famous night-journey from Mecca to Jerusalem, and from thence to heaven, of which he tells us in the 17th chapter of his Alcoran. For the people calling on him for miracles to prove his mission, and he being able to work none, to solve the matter, he invents this story of his journey to heaven; which must be acknowledged to have miracle enough in it, by all those who have faith to believe it. And yet it being believed by all that profess the Mahometan religion, as a main article of their faith, and as such set down in all the books of their authentic traditions, how absurd soever it be, since my design is to give as full an account as I can of this man's imposture, it obligeth me to relate it. His relation of it is as followeth:

^e At night as he lay in his bed with his best beloved wife

^a Elmacin. Abul Pharaghius. Abul Feda, &c.

^b Gentii Notæ ad Musladinum Sadum, p. 568.

^c Joannes Andreas, c. 12. Sionita in Appendice ad Geographiam Nubiensem, c. 8. Guadagnol, Tract. 2. c. 10. § 12.

^d Thevenot's Travels, Part 3. lib. 1. c. 49.

^e Rodericus Toletanus, c. 5. Joannes Andreas, c. 8. Richardi Confutatio Legis Saracenicæ. c. 1. & c. 7. Cantacuzeni Orat. 4. Guadagnol, Tract. 2. c. 2. § 2. Bellonius, l. 3. c. 7. Bo-

Ayeſha, he heard a knocking at his door, whereon ariſing, he found there the angel Gabriel, with ſeventy pair of wings expanded from his ſides, whiter than ſnow, and clearer than cryſtal, and the beaſt Alborak ſtanding by him, which they ſay is the beaſt on which the prophets uſed to ride, when they were carried from one place to another, upon the execution of any divine command. Mahomet deſcribes it to be a beaſt as white as milk, and of a mixed nature between an aſs and a mule, and alſo of a ſize between both, and of that extraordinary ſwiftness, that his paſſing from one place to another, was as quick as that of lightning; and from hence it is that he hath the name of Alborak, that word ſignifying lightning in the Arabic tongue. As ſoon as Mahomet appeared at the door, the angel Gabriel moſt kindly embracing him, did with a very ſweet and pleaſing countenance ſalute him in the name of God, and told him that he was ſent to bring him unto God into heaven, where he ſhould ſee ſtrange myſteries, which were not lawful to be ſeen by any other man, and then bid him get upon the Alborak. But the beaſt, it ſeems, having long lain idle from the time of Chriſt till Mahomet (there having been no prophet in all that interval to employ him) was grown ſo reſty and ſkittish, that he would not ſtand ſtill for Mahomet to get up upon him, till at length he was forced to bribe him to it, by promiſing him a place in paradise; whereon having quietly taken him on his back, the angel Gabriel leading the way with the bridle of the beaſt in his hand, he carried him from Mecca to Jeruſalem in the twinkling of an eye. On his coming thither, all the prophets and ſaints departed, appeared at the gate of the temple to ſalute

him, and from thence attending him into the chief oratory, desired him to pray for them, and then departed. Whereupon Mahomet with the angel Gabriel going out of the temple, found there a ladder of light ready fixed for them, which they immediately ascended, leaving the Alborak there tied at a rock till their return.

On their arrival at the first heaven, the angel Gabriel knocked at the gate, and having informed the porter who he was, and that he brought Mahomet the friend of God with him by the divine command, the gates were immediately opened, which he describes to be of a prodigious largeness. This first heaven, he tells us, was all of pure silver, and that he there saw the stars hanging from it by chains of gold, each being of the bigness of mount Noho, near Mecca in Arabia; and that in these stars angels kept watch and ward for the guard of heaven, to keep off the devils from approaching near it, lest they should over-hear and know what was there done. On his first entering into this heaven, he saith he met an old decrepit man, and this was our first father Adam, who immediately embraced him, giving God thanks for so great a son, and then recommended himself to his prayers. As he entered further, he saw a multitude of angels of all manner of shapes; some in that of men, others in that of birds, and others in that of beasts of all manner of sorts. And among those who appeared in the several shapes of birds, he there saw a cock of colour as white as snow, and of so prodigious a bigness, that his feet standing upon the first heaven, his head reached up to the second, which was at the distance of five hundred years journey from it, according to the rate as we usually travel here on earth. But others among them, as they relate this matter from their prophet, hyperbolize much higher concerning it, telling us, that the head of this cock reacheth up through all the seven heavens, as far as the throne of God, which is above

seven times higher; and in the description of him, say, that his wings are all over decked with carbuncles and pearls, and that he extends the one of them to the east, and the other to the west, at a distance proportionable to his height. Concerning all these, the Impostor tells us the angel Gabriel informed him, that they were angels which did from thence intercede with God for all living creatures on the earth. That those who interceded for men, had there the shape of men; that those who interceded for beasts, the shape of beasts; and those who interceded for birds, the shape of birds, according to their several kinds. And that as to the great cock, that he was the chief angel of the cocks; that every morning God singing an holy hymn, this cock constantly joined with him in it by his crowing, which is so loud, that all hear it that are in heaven and earth, except men and fairies, and then all the other cocks that are in heaven and earth crow also. But when the day of judgment draws near, then God shall command him to draw in his wings, and crow no more, which shall be a sign, that that day is at hand, to all that are in heaven and earth, excepting still men and fairies, who being afore deaf to his crowing, shall not then be sensible of his silence from it. And this cock the Mahometans look on to be in that great favour with God, that whereas it is a common saying among them, that there are three voices which God always hears; they reckon the first the voice of him that is constant in reading the Alcoran; the second, the voice of him that early every morning prayeth for the pardon of his sins; and the third, the voice of this cock when he croweth, which they say is ever most acceptable unto him.

All this stuff of the cock, Abdollah helped Mahomet to, out of the Talmudists. For it is all borrowed from them, with some little variation only, to make it look not totally the same. For in the tract Bava Bathra of the Babylonish Tal-

mud, we have a story of such a prodigious bird, called ^f Ziz, which standing with his feet upon the earth, reacheth up unto the heavens with his head, and with the spreading of his wings darkeneth the whole orb of the sun, and causeth a total eclipse thereof. This bird the Chaldee Paraphrast on the ^g Psalms says, is a cock, which he describes of the same bigness, and tells us that he crows before the Lord. And the Chaldee Paraphrast on ^h Job also tells us of him, and of his crowing every morning before the Lord, and that God giveth him wisdom for this purpose. What is farther said of this bird of the Talmudists, may be seen in Buxtorf's Synogoga, Judaica, cap. 50. and in Purchas' Pilgrimage, lib. 2. cap. 20.

From this first heaven, the Impostor tells us, he ascended up into the second, which was at the distance of five hundred years journey above it, and this he makes to be the distance of every one of the seven heavens each above the other. Here the gates being opened unto him, as in the first heaven, at his entrance he met Noah, who rejoicing much at the sight of him, recommended himself to his prayers. In this heaven, which was all made of pure gold, the Impostor tells us he saw twice as many angels as in the former, and among them one of a prodigious greatness. For his feet being placed on this second heaven, his head reached to the third.

From this second heaven he ascended up into the third, which was made of precious stones; where at the entrance he met Abraham, who also recommended himself to his prayers. And there he saw a vast many more angels than in the former heaven, and among them another great one of so prodigious a

^f Buxtorfii Lexicon Rabbinicum in voce.

^g Psal. 50. v. 11. & Psal. 80 v. 14.

^h Ad cap. 3. v. 7. & ad cap. 38. v. 36. & ad cap. 39. v. 16.

size, that the distance between his two eyes was as much as seventy thousand days journey, according to our rate of travelling here on earth. But here Mahomet was out in his mathematics; for the distance between a man's eyes being in proportion to his height but as one to seventy two, according to this rate, the height of this angel must have been near fourteen thousand years journey, which is four times as much as the height of all his seven heavens together, and therefore it is impossible such an angel could ever stand within any one of them. But notwithstanding this, here he placeth him, and in his description of him, tells us, that he had before him a large table, in which he was continually writing in, and blotting out; and that having asked the angel Gabriel of him, he was informed by him that this was the angel of death, who continually writes into the table, which he had before him, the names of all that are to be born, and there computes the days of their life, and as he finds they have completed the number assigned them, again blots them out, and that whoever hath his name thus blotted out by him, immediately dies.

From hence he ascended up into the fourth heaven, which was all of emerald; where at the entrance he met Joseph the son of Jacob, who recommended himself to his prayers. And in this heaven he after saw a vastly larger number of angels than in the former, and among them another great angel, as high as from this fourth heaven to the fifth, who was continually weeping, and making great lamentation and mourning; and this, the angel Gabriel told him, was for the sins of men, and the destruction which they did thereby bring upon themselves.

From hence he ascended up into the fifth heaven, which was made of adamant, where he found Moses, who recommended himself to his prayers; and there also he saw a much greater number of angels than in the former heaven.

From hence he ascended up into the sixth heaven, which was all of carbuncle, where he found John the Baptist, who recommended himself to his prayers. And here he also saw the number of angels much-increased beyond what he had seen in any of the former heavens.

From hence he ascended up into the seventh heaven, which was all made of divine light, and here he found Jesus Christ; where it is to be observed, he alters his stile. For he saith not, that Jesus Christ recommended himself to his prayers, but that he recommended himself to Jesus Christ, desiring him to pray for him; whereby he acknowledgeth him certainly to be the greater. But it was his usage through the whole scene of his imposture, thus to flatter the Christians on all occasions. Here he saith he found a much greater number of angels than in all the other heavens besides, and among them one extraordinary angel having seventy thousand heads, and in every head seventy thousand tongues, and every tongue uttering seventy thousand distinct voices at the same time, with which he continued day and night incessantly praising God.

The angel Gabriel having brought him thus far, told him, that it was not permitted him to go any farther, and therefore directed him to ascend up the rest of the way to the throne of God by himself, which he saith he performed with great difficulty, passing through waters and snow, and many other such difficult passages, till he came where he heard a voice saying unto him, 'O Mahomet, salute thy Creator;' from whence ascending higher, he came into a place, where he saw a vast extension of light of that exceeding brightness, that his eyes could not bear it, and this was the habitation of the Almighty, where his throne was placed, on the right side of which, he says, God's name and his own were written in these Arabic words, *La ellah ellallah Mohammed resul ollah*, i. e. *there is no god but God, and Mahomet is his prophet*. Which is the

Creed of the Mahometans ; which words he also says, he found written upon all the gates of the seven heavens, which he passed through. Being approached to the presence of God, as ⁱ near as within two bow-shots, he tells us he saw him sitting on his throne, with a covering of seventy thousand vails before his face ; that on his drawing thus near, in sign of his favour, he put forth his hand, and laid it upon him, which was of that exceeding coldness, that it pierced to the very marrow of his back, and he could not bear it. That after this, God entering into a very familiar converse with him, revealed unto him a great many hidden mysteries, made him understand the whole of his law, and gave him many things in charge concerning his instructing men in the knowledge of it ; and in conclusion, bestowed on him several privileges above the rest of mankind. As that he should be the perfectest of all creatures ; that at the day of judgment he should be honoured and advanced above all the rest of mankind ; that he should be the redeemer of all that believe in him ; that he should have the knowledge of all languages ; and lastly, that the spoils of all whom he should conquer in war, should belong to him alone. And then returning, he found the angel Gabriel tarrying for him in the place where he left him ; who conducting him back again through all the seven heavens the same way that he brought him, did set him again upon the Alborak, which he left tied at Jerusalem ; and then taking the bridle in his hand, conducted him back to Mecca in the same manner as he brought him thence, and all this within the space of the tenth part of one night.

On his relating this extravagant fiction to the people the next morning after he pretended the thing happened, it was

received by them as it deserved, with a general hoot; ^k some laughed at the ridiculousness of the story, and others taking indignation at it, cried out shame upon him for telling them such an abominable lie, and by way of reproach, bid him ascend up to heaven by day-light, there immediately before them all, that they might see it with their eyes, and then they would believe him. And even of his disciples, a great many were so ashamed of him for this story, that ^l they left him thereon; and more would have followed their example, but that ^m Abu Beker came in to put a stop to the defection, by vouching the truth of all that Mahomet had related, and professed his firm belief to the whole of it; for which reason he had ever after the title ⁿ of *Affadick*, that is, the *Just*, because of the extraordinary merit of his faith in this particular. And whoever becomes a Mahometan, must have the same faith also; this story being as firmly believed by all of that religion, as any thing in the gospel is by us Christians. Only there has been this question moved among them, whether it ^o were only a vision of the night, or a real journey. Those that would solve the absurdity of it, would have it only be a vision, and that most of the particulars of it are to be resolved into figure and allegory; but the major vote hath carried it for a real journey; and to this sense it being now pinned down, there is no one among them that dares in the least to doubt thereof.

The imposture was never in greater danger of being totally blasted, than by this ridiculous fable, such a stumbling-block

^k Cantacuzen. Orat. 4. Richardi Confutatio Legis Saracenicæ, c. 14. Hott. Hist. Orient. lib. 2. c. 6.

^l Joannes Andreas, c. 8. Hott. ib. Friar Richard, and Cantacuzenus say, they were a thousand that left him on this occasion.

^m Hott. Hist. Orient. lib. 2. c. 6.

ⁿ Elmacin, lib. 1. c. 2. dicit cum sic vocatum esse propter verificationem Mefræ.

^o Hottingeri Hist. Orient. lib. 2. c. 6.

did it lay even before those of his own party, and therefore he needed to interpose the utmost of his art to support the credit of it ; for which purpose he not only got his friend Abu Beker to be a voucher to it ; but also brings in God himself in two places of his Alcoran bearing witness thereto, that is, in the chapter of the children of Israel, and in the chapter of the Star ; in the last of which he makes God to swear by the star to the truth of it, that Mahomet related nothing in this story, but what he had seen ; that he was admitted to approach him in the highest heavens, within the length of two bow-shots ; and had seen the great wonders of the Lord, and had many hidden mysteries there revealed unto him ; and that therefore men ought not to dispute any more against him concerning it.

But how ridiculous soever the story may appear, Mahomet had his design therein, beyond barely telling such a miraculous adventure of himself to the people. Hitherto he had only given them the Alcoran, which was his written law, and had owned himself no farther than barely the messenger of God to deliver it unto them, telling them that it was brought to him by the angel Gabriel ; and that as he received it, so he published it unto them, without offering at any comment, explication, or additional interpretation of his own concerning it ; and therefore when gruelled with any objection from his adversaries against it (as he often was while at Mecca, where he was continually teased and perplexed with some or other of them) his usual refuge was in this saying, that the Alcoran was ^p God's book, and that he only could explain the meaning of it ; and it was wisdom in him at first not to assume any farther. But now learning from his friend Abdollah, that the Jews besides the written law dictated by God himself, had also

^p Alcoran, c. 3, &c. Richardi Confutatio, c. 17. Cantacuzeni Orat. 1. § 3. & 5. Ecchelenfis Eutyeh. vindicat. p. 383.

another law called the oral law, and given with it (as they pretend) to Moses himself while in the mount, and from him delivered to the elders of the people, and from them down to after ages by oral tradition ; and understanding also that this law was in as great authority with them, as the other, and that it had its whole foundation in the sayings and dictates which were pretended to be from Moses, and preserved by the memories of those who conversed with him ; he had a desire for the future to advance his authority to the same pitch, and make all his sayings and dictates go for oracles among his Mufslmans, as well as those which were pretended to be from Moses, did among the Jews. And for this end chiefly was it that he intended this story of his journey to heaven. For could he once make it believed among his followers, that he had there such a converse with God as Moses had with him in the mount, and was there fully instructed by him in the knowledge of all divine truths, as this story pretends he was, he thought he should therein have a sufficient foundation to build this pretence upon, and might by a just consequence from it, claim the whole which he aimed at ; and he was not mistaken herein. For how ridiculous soever the thing at first appeared, yet in the result he carried his point, and obtained all that by the project, which he proposed to himself from it. For the whole of it at length going down with those who had swallowed the rest of his imposture, from that time all his sayings became looked on as sacred truths brought down from heaven, and every word which at any time dropped from so enlightened a person (as this story supposeth him to be) as well as every action which he did, any way relating to his religion, were all carefully observed by them ; which being after his death all ^a

^a Pocockii Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 298, & 299. Joannes Andreas. c. 3. Bellonius, lib. 3. c. 4. Hottingeri Bibliotheca Ori-

collected together from the memoirs of those who conversed with him, make up those volumes of traditions from him, which they call the *Sonnah*, which are with the Mahometans the same in respect of the *Alcoran*, that the oral law among the Jews is in respect of the written. And as among the Jews there are many books, in which this oral law is recited, explained and digested under several heads and chapters by many different authors among their Rabbies, who have employed their pains and studies in this matter; so also are there the like number of books among the Mahometans concerning their *Sonnah*,^r in which all the sayings and doings of Mahomet, relating to his religion, as also the constitutions of the seniors, (that is, of the first Caliphs that succeeded him, especially the four first) concerning the same, are collected, explained, and digested under several heads or common places, by the compilers of them, which books make up the sum of their theology, as well speculative as practical; and in them indeed is contained the whole of their religion, as now practised among them. And therefore so much of the imposture which I now undertake to give an account of, being in these traditions, and they all founded upon this journey of Mahomet to heaven, where he pretended to have been instructed in them by God himself; this sufficiently justifieth my being thus long in relating his fabulous story of it.

But how fabulous and absurd soever this story be, the Socinians, who have in so many things copied after this Impostor, have not stuck to borrow this also from him. For the many texts of scripture which tell us of our Saviour's coming to us from the heavens above, manifestly proving his existence there

entalis, c. 2. Ecchelenfis Eutychn. vindicat. c. 27. Gentii Notæ ad Musladinum Sadum, p. 578.

^r Ebnol Athir, Ebnol Kahai, Poocock. ib.

in his divinity, before the assuming of his humanity here on earth (which they impiously deny), to solve the matter, they have by just such another story as this of Mahomet, carried him to heaven, a little before the taking of his ministry upon him, there to be instructed by God himself in the doctrines which he was to teach; and refer all that is said in holy scripture of his coming from heaven, to this his journey thither of their own feigning. Which shews how miserable a shift they are reduced to, for the support of that impiety which they assert. For take but this from them, and it must all necessarily fall to the ground.

After his publishing this fiction, and the revolt of so many of his disciples, as happened thereon, his adversaries grew in strength so fast upon him, that he could no longer protect those who adhered to him, as he had hitherto done; but some of them, to the number of about an hundred persons, having made themselves more than ordinary obnoxious to the government, by some practices against it, were forced to fly from Mecca to Nagash king of Ethiopia, where Mahomet's letters, which they carried with them, obtained their protection, though the men of Mecca sent two of their principal citizens after them in an embassy to that king, to demand them to be delivered unto them. And Mahomet, with the rest that tarried behind, found it very difficult for them to subsist any longer there. For after the departure of so many of his faithfullest adherents into this exile, this farther diminution of his number, made him still less able to withstand these insults which his adversaries were continually on all occasions making upon him. But what he lost at Mecca, he got at Medina,

* Abul Feda. Ebnol Athir, Kamus, Pocockii Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 172. Ecchelenis Eutyck. Vindicat. c. 27. Golii Notæ ad Alfraganum, p. 53.

then called *Yathreb* [†] a city lying at the northern end of *Hagiu*, two hundred and seventy miles distant from Mecca, which being inhabited, [‡] the one part by Jews, and the other part by heretical Christians, it seems these two different parties not well agreeing in the same city, the factions and feuds that arose between them, drove one of the parties to Mahomet; and on the thirteenth year [‡] of his pretended mission, there came to him from thence seventy-three men, and two women, who embraced his imposture, and swore fealty unto him, whereon he chose twelve out of them, whom he retained a while with him at Mecca to instruct them in his new religion, and then sent them back again to *Yathreb*, to be as his twelve apostles, there to propagate it in that town; in which they laboured with that success, that in a short time they drew over a great party of the inhabitants to embrace the imposture; of which Mahomet receiving an account, resolved to retire thither, as finding Mecca now grown too hot for him. For the chief men of the city, finding that Mahomet's indefatigable industry and cunning still kept up his party, do what they could to suppress it, resolved without farther delay to strike at the root, and prevent the farther spreading of the mischief [‡] by cutting off him that was the chief author of it. Of which he having received full and early intelligence, and finding no other way to avoid the blow but to fly from it, ordered all his party, whom he could prevail with to accompany him in his banishment, [‡] secretly in the evening to withdraw out of the

[†] *Geographia Nubienfis* Clim. 2. Part. 5. *Golii Notæ ad Alfraganum*, p. 98.

[‡] *Sharestani Disputatio Christiani*, c. 4. *Joannes Andreas*, c. 1. *Pocockii Spec. Hist. Arab.* p. 137.

[‡] *Elmacin. lib. 1. c. 1.*

[‡] *Alcoran*, c. 8. *Joannes Andreas*, c. 1. *Bidawi Comment. ad Alcorani*, c. 8. *Abunazar. Hottin. Hist. Orient. l. 2. c. 5.*

[‡] *Elmacin. ib. Abul Pharaghius, Abul Feda, &c.*

city, and retire to Yathreb. And when he had seen them all gone, he and ^a Abu Beker followed after, leaving only Ali behind, who having set in order some affairs that detained him, came to them on the third day after. As soon as his flight was publicly known, parties were sent out to pursue after him, and he difficultly escaped them ^b by hiding himself for some time in a cave, till the heat of the pursuit was over.

On the ^c 12th day of the month, which the Arabs call the former Rabia, that is on the 24th of our September, he came to Yathreb, and was there received with great acclamations by the party which called him thither. But whether this party were of the Jews, or the Christians, I find not said in any author; only if we may conjecture from the great kindness which at this time he expressed towards the Christians, and the implacable hatred which he ever after bore the Jews, it will from hence appear, that the former were the friends that invited him thither, and the latter the opposite party that were enemies unto him. And what he saith of each of them in the fifth chapter of his Alcoran, which was one of the first which he published after his coming to Yathreb, may seem fully to clear the matter. For his words there are, ‘ thou shalt find
 ‘ the Jews to be very great enemies to the true believers; and
 ‘ the Christians to have great inclination and amity towards
 ‘ them, for they have priests and religions that are humble,
 ‘ who have eyes full of tears when they hear mention of the
 ‘ doctrine which God hath inspired into thee, because of their
 ‘ knowledge of the truth, and say, Lord we believe in thy law,
 ‘ write us in the number of them who profess thy unity. Who

^a Elmacin, lib. 1. c. 1. Clenardi Epist. lib. 1. p. 52.

^b Alcoran, c. 9. Bidawi in Comment. ad illud Caput, & ad cap. 16. Hottingeri Hist. Orient. lib. 2. c. 5.

^c Elmacin. lib. 1. c. 1. Golii Notæ ad Alfraganum, p. 15. Ahmed Ebn Yuseph. Pocockii Spec. Hist. Arab, p. 174.

‘ shall hinder us from believing in God, and the truth wherein we have been instructed? We desire with passion, O Lord, to be in the number of the just.’ By this we may see what a deplorable decay the many divisions and distractions which then reigned in the Eastern church, had there brought the Christian religion into, when its professors could so easily desert it, for that gross imposture which an illiterate barbarian proposed unto them. And indeed it is no strange thing for men, when once they have deserted the orthodox profession of the Christian faith, to flee from one error to another, till at length, by several changes in religion, they change the whole of it away, and give themselves up to total impiety. For we see it daily practised among us.

On Mahomet’s first coming to ^d Yathreb, he lodged in the house of Chalid Abu Job, one of the chief men of the party that called him thither, till he had built himself an house of his own, which he immediately set about, and adjoining thereto also erected a mosque at the same time for the exercise of his new-invented religion; and it is recorded as an instance of his injustice, that he ^e violently dispossessed certain poor orphans, the children of an inferior artificer a little before deceased, of the ground on which it stood, and so founded this first fabrick for his worship, with the like wickedness as he did his religion. And having thus settled himself in this town, he continued there ever after, to the time of his death. For which reason it thenceforth losing the name of Yathreb, became called ^f Medinato’l nabi, i. e. *the city of the prophet*, and simply Medina, by which name it hath been ever since called, even unto this day.

^d Elmacin. lib. 1. c. 1. Abul Feda, &c.

^e Disputatio Christiani, c. 4.

^f Geographia Nubienfis Clim. 2. part 5. Appen. ad eandem cap. 8. Golii Notæ ad Alfraganum, p. 98. Abul Feda, Alkamus, &c.

From this flight of Mahomet, the ² Hegira, which is the æra of the Mahometans, begins its computation. It was first appointed by Omar the third emperor of the Saracens, on this ¹ occasion. There happened a contest before him about a debt of money: the creditor had from his debtor a bill, wherein he acknowledged the debt, and obliged himself to pay it on such a day of such a month. The day and the month being passed, the creditor sues his debtor before Omar for the money. The debtor acknowledged the debt, but denied the day of payment to be yet come, alleging the month in the bill mentioned, to be that month in the year next ensuing; but the creditor contended that it was that month in the year last past; and for want of a date to the bill, it being impossible to decide this controversy, Omar called his council together, to consider of a method how to prevent this difficulty for the future; where it was decreed, that all bills and other instruments should ever after have inserted into them the date both of the day of the month, and also of the year, in which they were signed. And as to the year, he having consulted with Harmuzan, a learned Persian then with him, by his advice ordained all computations to be made for the future from the flight of Mahomet from Mecca to Medina. And for this reason this æra was called the Hegira, which in the Arabic language signifieth a *flight*. It takes its beginning from the sixteenth day of July, in the year of our Lord six hundred twenty and two. And ever since this decree of Omar (which happened in the eighteenth year of it) it hath constantly been used among the Mahometans, in the same manner as the computation from the incarnation of our Lord Christ is with us Chris-

² Afraganus, cap. 1. Golii Notæ ad eundem, p. 53. Elmacin. lib. 1. c. 1. & c. 3. Eutychius. Abul Pharaghius, Abul Feda, &c. Pocockii Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 172, 173.

¹ Ecchelenfis Hist. Arab. Part 1. c. 10.

tians. The day that Mahomet left Mecca, was on ⁱ the first of the former Rabia, and he came to Medina on the ^k twelfth of the same month. But the Hegira begins two months before, from the first of Moharram. For that being the first month of the Arabian year, Omar would make no alteration as to that, but anticipated the computation fifty-nine days, that he might begin his æra from the beginning of that year in which this flight of the Impostor happened, which gave name thereto. Till the appointing of this æra, it was usual with the Arabians to compute from the last great war they were engaged in. And at Mecca the æra of the Elephant, and the æra of the Impious War, being those which they computed by all the time of Mahomet, I shall give an account of them.

The æra of the Elephant had its beginning from ^l a war which the inhabitants of Mecca had with the Ethiopians. It happened in that very year in which Mahomet was born, on this occasion. About fifty years before the time of Mahomet, there reigned over the Homerites, an ancient nation of the Arabs, lying to the south of Mecca, a certain king called ^m Du Nawas, who having embraced the Jewish religion, persecuted the Christian, which had been planted there for at least three hundred years before, and did the utmost he was able to extirpate it out of his dominions. For which purpose he made him a deep ditch or furnace in the earth, and after having heated it with fire, caused all those of the Christian religion to be thrown thereinto, who would not renounce their faith, and turn to Judaism. During which persecution the

ⁱ Golii Notæ ad Alfraganum, p. 52, & 55.

^k Elmacin. lib. 1. c. 1.

^l Al Kodai, Golii Notæ ad Alfraganum, p. 34. Pocock. Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 173, & 174.

^m Abul Feda, Al Masudi, Ecchelenfis Hist. Arab. part 1. c. 10. Pocockii Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 62.

^a Arabian writers tell a very memorable story of a Christian woman, who being brought to the furnace with a son of hers very young, whom she carried in her arms, was at the sight of the fire so affrighted, she drew back, as if she would rather choose to comply with the persecutors, and renounce her faith, than thus perish for it; at which the child cried out. ‘fear not, mother, to die for your religion, for then after this fire you shall never feel any other.’ Whereon the mother being again encouraged, went on and completed her martyrdom. This persecution drove several of the Homerite Christians to fly into Ethiopia for safety; where making their complaints to the king, who was a Christian, of the cruel persecution of Du Nawas against them, prevailed with him to send Aryat his uncle with an army of seventy thousand men for their relief: ^o who having overthrown Du Nawas in battle, pursued him so hard that he forced him into the sea, where he perished. Whereon the kingdom of the Homerites fell into the hands of the Ethiopians, and Aryat governed it twenty years. After him succeeded Abraham Al Ashram, who having built a famous ^p church at Sanaa, the chief city of the Homerites, abundance of Arabians resorted thither to the Christian worship, so that the temple of Mecca began to be neglected, and the heathen worship there, hitherto performed with so great concurrence from all parts of Arabia, to grow into decay: at which the men of Mecca were exceedingly disturbed. For they had the chief of their support from the great resort of pilgrims who came thither every year from all parts of Arabia

^a Al Masudi Ecchelenfis, ib.

^o Al Jannabi, Ahmed Ebn Yusef, Ecchelenfis Hist. Arab. part 2. c. 1. Pocockii Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 63.

^p Abul Feda, Al Jannabi, Ahmed Ebn Yusef, Zamachshari, Bidawi, & Jallalani in Commentariis ad cap. 105. Alcorani. Pocock. Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 64. Golii Notæ ad Alfraganum, p. 54.

to worship their heathen deities, and perform their annual solemn ceremonies unto them. And therefore to express their indignation against this church, which so much threatened their main interest with total ruin, some of them went to Sanaa, and getting privately into the church, did in a most contumelious manner defile it all over with their excrements. At which Abraham was so incensed, that to revenge the affront, he swore the destruction of the temple of Mecca: and accordingly to effect it, marched thither with a great army, and besieged the city. But not being able to compass his end, (I suppose for want of provision for his numerous forces in so desert and barren a country) he was forced to march back again with loss and disgrace; and because he had several elephants in his army, for that reason this was called, *the War of the Elephant*; and the æra by which they reckoned from it, *the Æra of the Elephant*. And to this war it is that the 105th chapter of the Alcoran, called the *Chapter of the Elephant*, doth relate; where Mahomet tells us, ‘ how the Lord treated them ‘ that came mounted upon elephants to ruin the temple of ‘ Mecca, and that he defeated their treacherous design, and ‘ sent against them great armies of birds, which threw down ‘ stones upon their heads, and made them like corn in the ‘ field, which is destroyed and trodden down by the beasts.’ Where ^a the commentators of the Alcoran tell us, that to preserve the temple of Mecca from the intended destruction, God sent against the Ethiopians great armies of birds, each of which carried three stones, the one in the mouth, and the other two in the two feet, which they threw down upon their heads; and that those stones, although not much bigger than pease, were yet of that weight, that falling upon the helmet, they pierced that and the man through; and that on each of

^a Zamachshari, Bidawi, Jallalani, &c.

them was written the name of him that was to be slain by it; and that the army of the Ethiopians being thus destroyed, the temple of Mecca was saved. For Mahomet having resolved to continue that temple in its former reputation, and make it the chief place of his new invented worship, as it had been before of the heathen, coined this miracle among many others,¹ on purpose to gain it the greater veneration in the minds of his deluded followers, although there might be several then alive, who were able to give him the lie thereto, it being but fifty four years before the beginning of the Hegira, that this war happened. For it was the very year² in which Mahomet was born. But perchance this chapter came not forth in public, till Othman's edition of the Alcoran, which was many years after, when all might be dead that could remember any thing³ of this war, and the fable thereby out of danger of being contradicted by any of those who knew the contrary.

The æra of the Impious War began from the twentieth year of the æra of the Elephant, and had its name from a terrible war, which was then waged between⁴ the Korashites and Kaifailanites, in which Mahomet first⁵ entered the school of war under his uncle Abu Taleb, being then twenty years old. It was called the Impious War, because it proceeded to that heat and fury, that they carried it on even in those months, when it was reckoned impious among them to wage war. For it was⁶ an ancient constitution through all Arabia,

¹ Golii Notæ ad Alfraganum, p. 54. Pocockii Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 64

² Pocockii Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 174. Golii Notæ ad Alfraganum, p. 54.

³ Al Kodai, Al Kamus, &c. Pocockii Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 174. in Margin.

⁴ Al Jauhari. Al Shareftani. Al Kamus, Cazwini, Golius in Notis ad Alfraganum, p. 4, 5, & 9. Pococ. Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 174, & 176.

to hold four months of the year sacred, in which all war was to cease : and these were the months of Moharram, Rajeb, Dulkaada, and Dulhaga ; the first, the seventh, the eleventh, and the twelfth of the year, in which it was observed with the greatest religion among all their tribes, to use no act of hostility against each other ; but with how great fury soever one tribe might be engaged against another (as war usual among them) as soon as any of those sacred months began, they all immediately desisted, and taking off the heads from their spears, and laying aside all other weapons of war, had intercourse, and intermingled together, as if there had been perfect peace and friendship between them, without any fear of each other ; so that if a man should meet on those months him that had slain his father, or his brother, he durst not meddle with him, how violent soever his hatred or revenge might prompt him to it. And this was constantly observed among all the ancient Arabs, till broken in this war, which from hence was called the Impious War. And in this impious war * Mahomet having first taken arms, gave a presage thereby to what impious purpose he would use them all his life after.

But the Hegira being that, which all of the Mahometan religion have, ever since the constitution of Omar, computed by ; the subject matter of the history which I now write, obligeth me henceforth to make use of this æra through the remaining part of it. But because it computeth by lunar years only, and not by solar, it is requisite that I here inform the reader of the nature of those years, and the manner how the Hegira computeth by them. Anciently the Arabs, although † they always used lunar years, yet by intercalating

* Al Kodai, Al Kamus, Pocoekii Specim. Hist. Arab. p. 174.

† Al Jauhari, Ebnol Athir, Pocoekii Specim. Hist. Arab. p. 177.

seven months in nineteen years, in the manner as do the Jews, reduced them to solary years; and consequently had their months always fixed to the same season of the year. But this growing out of use about the time of Mahomet, their year hath ever since been strictly lunar, consisting only of three hundred fifty-four days, eight hours, and forty-eight minutes, * which odd hours and minutes in thirty years making eleven days exactly, they do intercalate a day on the 2d, 5th, 7th, 10th, 13th, 15th, 18th, 21st, 24th, 26th, and 29th, years of this period. So that their year, in those years of this period, consists of three hundred fifty-five days, by reason of the intercalated day, which they then add to the last month of the year. And this year all that profess the Mahometan religion have ever made use of; and there is a passage in the Alcoran * whereby they are confined to it. For the Impostor there calls it an impiety to prolong the year, that is, by adding an intercalary month thereto. So that according to this account, the Mahometan year falling eleven days short of the solary; it hence comes to pass, that the beginning of the year of the Hegira is unfixed and ambulatory (the next year always beginning eleven days sooner than the former) and therefore sometimes it happens in summer, sometimes in spring, sometimes in winter, and sometimes in autumn; and in thirty-three years compass goes through all the different seasons of the year, and comes about again to the same time of the solary year, although not exactly to the same day. Which being like to create some confusion to us who are used to the solary year; to prevent this, after the year of the Hegira, I add the day of the month in the year of our Lord in which it begins.

* Golii Notæ ad Alfraganum, p. 11. Scaliger de Emendatione temporum, lib. 2. cap. de Anno Hegiræ.

* Alcoran, c. 9.

The months of the Arab year are as follow; 1. Moharram. 2. Saphar. 3. The former Rabia. 4. The latter Rabia. 5. The former Jomada. 6. The latter Jomada. 7. Rajeb. 8. Shaban. 9. Ramadan. 10. Shawall. 11. Dulkaada. 12. Dulhaga. The first hath thirty days, and the second twenty-nine, and so alternatively to the end of the year; only in the intercalary years, Dulhaga hath thirty days, because of the day added; but in all other years only twenty-nine.

But besides this æra, the Mahometans in Persia have another, which they reckon by in all civil matters, called the *Æra of Yazdejerd*. It computes by solary years of three hundred sixty-five days without any intercalation, and is in use among the astronomers all over the East. It hath its beginning ten years after the Hegira, not from the death of Yazdejerd (as all chronologers hitherto following the mistake of Scaliger, have erroneously asserted) but from his first advancement to the crown of Persia. The history of this matter is thus. ^b After the death of Chosroes, the second of that name (which happened An. Dom. 628.) in four years time eight several persons having successively possessed themselves of the throne of Persia, and most of them by violent means, this created such distractions and confusions through all that kingdom, by reason of the great divisions, and several different interests, which so many revolutions in so short a time had occasioned among them, that at length all parties growing weary of so destructive a state of their affairs, came to an agreement of settling again under a prince of the royal family, and to this purpose made choice of Yazdejerd, a grandson of Chosroes, who was a young man of fifteen years old; and sent into Arabia (where he was fled for his safety) to Abu Beker, then

^b Abul Pharaghius, p. 112. & p. 116. Eutychius, part 2. p. 256. & p. 296. Elmacin. lib. 1. c. 2. & c. 4.

newly chose successor to Mahomet, to demand him for their king; and having accordingly obtained him, did, on the 16th day of June, Anno Dom. 632. in the eleventh year of the Hegira, place him on the throne of his ancestors; which being so signal a restoration of that kingdom to its former peace and settlement, after so great a disturbance of it, they made this the beginning of a new æra ^c among them, which from the name of the king, they called the æra of Yazdejerd. And therefore it doth not begin from the death of that prince; for he lived nineteen years after, and fought many battles against the Saracens, during the reign of Omar and Othman, successors of Abu Beker, in defence of his country, till at length he was slain by the treachery of one of his own captains, in the thirty-first year of the Hegira, Anno Dom. 651. nineteen years after this æra, denominated from him, first commenced, which all agree was in the eleventh year of the Hegira.

Heg. 1. July 16. A. D. 622.] The first thing that ^d Mahomet did after his having settled himself at Medina, was to marry his daughter Fatima to his cousin Ali. She was the only child then living, of six which were born to him of Cadigha, his first wife; and indeed the only one which he had, notwithstanding the multitude of his wives, ^e that survived him, whom he exceedingly loved, and was used to give great commendations of her, reckoning her among the perfectest of women. For he was ^f used to say, that among men there were many perfect, but of women he would allow only four

^c Ulug. Beg. de Cognitione Epoch. c. 3. where speaking of the Persian epocha, he hath these words, Principium hujus Epochæ fuit dies Martis initio anni quo primum regnavit Yazdejerdus filius Shahriari.

^d Elmacin, lib. 1. c. 1. Abul Feda, &c.

^e Abul Pharaghius, p. 103.

^f Abul Feda, Pocockii Specim. Hist. Arab. p. 183.

to be such, and these were Asiah the wife of Pharaoh; Mary the mother of Christ; Cadigha his wife, and Fatima his daughter. From her all that pretend to be of the race of Mahomet derive their descent.

And now the Impostor having obtained the end he had been long driving at, that is, a town at his command where to arm his party, and head them with security; for the further prosecution of his design, he here enters on a new scene. Hitherto he had been preaching up his imposture for thirteen years together; for the remaining ten years of his life he takes the sword and fights for it. He had long been teased and perplexed at Mecca with questions, and objections, and disputes about what he preached, whereby being often gruelled and non-plussed, to the laughter of his auditors, and his own shame and confusion, out of hatred to this way ^s he henceforth forbids all manner of disputing about his religion; and that he might be sure to have no more of it, makes it for the future to be no less than death for any one in the least to contradict or oppose any of the doctrines which he had taught. The way that his religion was to be propagated, he now tells his disciples, was not by disputing, but ^h by fighting; and therefore commands them all to arm themselves, and slay with the sword all those that would not embrace it, unless they submitted to pay an annual tribute for the redemption of their lives. And according to this his injunction, even unto this day, all who live under any Mahometan government, and are not of their religion, ⁱ pay an annual tax for a constant mulct

^s Alcoran, c. 4. Cantacuzen. Orat. 1. § 12. Joannes Andreas, c. 12.

^h Alcoran, c. 2, 3, 4, 9, &c. Joannes Andreas, c. 12. Disputatio Christiani, c. 8. Cantacuzeni, Orat. I. Apolog. 4. Richardi Confutatio, c. 10.

ⁱ Thevenot. part 1. lib. 1. c. 56.

of their infidelity (which in Turkey ^k is called the *Carrage*) and are sure to be punished with ^l death, if in the least they contradict or oppose any doctrine that is received among them to have been taught by Mahomet. And certainly there could not be a wiser way devised for upholding so absurd an imposture, than by thus silencing, under so severe a penalty, all manner of opposition and disputes against it.

After the Impostor had sufficiently infused this doctrine into his disciples, he next proceeds to put it in practice; and having erected his standard, calls them all to come armed thereto; where having enrolled them all for the war ^m he gave his standard to his uncle Hamza, constituting him thereby his standard-bearer; and out of the special confidence he had in him, sent him out on the first expedition which was undertaken in his cause. For understanding that ⁿ the caravan of Mecca was now on the road in their return from Syria, he ordered out Hamza with a party of thirty horse to way-lay and plunder them; and he having accordingly posted himself in a wood in the country of Yamama, by which they were to pass, they tarried their coming; but on their approach, finding them guarded with three hundred men, sent from Mecca to convey them safe home, he durst not set upon them, but fled and returned to Medina, without effecting any thing. And several other expeditions, which were this year undertaken of the same nature, had no better success.

Heg. 2. July 5. A. D. 623.] The next year a very rich caravan going from Mecca towards Syria, and carrying a great quantity both of goods and money, which belonged to the merchants of Mecca, that traded into that country, he went

^k Thevenot, part 1. lib. 1. c. 28.

^l Cantacuzen. Orat. 2. § 5. Thevenot, part 1. lib. 1. c. 28.

^m Elmacin, lib. 1. c. 1.

ⁿ Elmacin, ib. Disputat. Christiani, c. 4.

out with three hundred and nineteen men to intercept it. But ° coming up with them at a place called Beder, he found them guarded by a convoy of a thousand men, under the command of Abu Sophian, whereon a fierce battle ensued between them; but Mahomet gaining the victory, Abu Sophian made as good a retreat as he could back again to Mecca, saving most of the caravan with him, at which Mahomet's men much ^p rejoined. However, great spoils were gained by them in this battle, which had like to have made a quarrel among them about the division. For the army consisting of two parties, the men of Medina, who were called the Ansars, that is, *Mahomet's helpers*; and the men of Mecca, who were called the Mohagerins, that is, *the companions of his flight*; the ^q former would have had a larger share than the latter. To solve this controversy, Mahomet composed the eighth chapter of his Alcoran, wherein he adjudgeth the fifth part to himself, and the rest to be equally divided between them.

The success of this battle gave great encouragement to the Impostor, and his party. He frequently brags of it in his Alcoran, and would have it believed that ^r two miracles were wrought for his obtaining of it; the first, that God made his enemies see his army as double to what it was, which helped to dismay them; and the second, that he sent troops of angels to his assistance, which helped to overcome them. They were to the number of three thousand (as he ^s himself tells us) but being invisible to every one's eye but his alone, the credit of

° Elmacin, lib. 1. c. 1. Abul Pharaghius, p. 102. Alcoran, c. 3. & Commentatores in illud caput.

^p Alcoran, c. 3.

^q Hottingeri Bibliotheca Orientalis, c. 2. ad Suratam Octavam Alcorani.

^r Alcoran, c. 3. Bidawi.

^s Alcoran, c. 3.

It stands upon no better foundation, than the rest of his imposture, his own single testimony only.

This year he altered the ^t Kebla, that is, the place towards which they directed their prayers. For it was usual among the people of the East, of all religions, to observe one particular point of the heavens, towards which they all turned their faces when they prayed. The Jews, in what part of the world soever they were, prayed with their faces ^u towards Jerusalem, because there was their temple; the Arabians towards ^x Mecca, because there was the caaba, the chief place of their heathen worship; the Sabeans ^y towards the north-star; and the Persian idolaters, who held fire and light to be their chief gods, ^z towards the east, because from thence the sun did arise, which they held to be the chief fountain of both. Mahomet, from the beginning of his imposture, had directed his disciples to pray ^a with their faces towards Jerusalem, which he was used to call the holy city, and the city of the prophets, and intended to have ordered his pilgrimages thither, and to have made it the chief place where all his sect were to worship. But now finding that his followers still bore a superstitious veneration to the temple of Mecca, which had for many ages before been the chief place of the idolatrous worship of the Arabians, and that it would be a very prevalent argument to reconcile his fellow-citizens to him, if he still preserved their temple in its former honour, he changed his former law to

^t Abul Pharaghius, p. 102. Al Kodai, Abul Feda, Joannes Andreas, c. 6.

^u Daniel, c. 6. v. 10. Buxtorfii Synagoga Judaica, c. 10. Maimonides in Halachoth Tephillah, c. 1. § 3.

^x Abul Pharaghius, p. 102.

^y Abul Pharaghius, p. 184.

^z Pocockii Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 148.

^a Abul Feda, Abul Pharaghius, p. 102. Joannes Andreas, c. 6. Pocockii Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 175.

serve his present purpose, and henceforth directed his disciples to pray with their faces towards ^b Mecca, and ordained the temple of that place, which from its square form was called the caaba (that word signifying a square in the Arabic tongue) to be the chief place of worship for all of his religion, to which they were still to perform their pilgrimages, as in former times. And to this change he was the more inclined, out of his aversion to the Jews, against whom having, about this time contracted an irreconcilable hatred, he liked not any longer to conform with them in this rite. And that his followers might be distinguished from them in this particular, is the reason ^c which he himself gives for this change. However, ^d many of his disciples were much scandalized hereat, judging no truth nor stability in that religion which was so often given to change; and several left him thereon.

From this time, the more to magnify the temple of Mecca, and to give the greater honour and reputation thereto, have we all those fabulous stories invented, which the Impostor tells us concerning it. As that it was ^e first built in heaven to be the place where the angels were to worship; and that Adam worshipped at it while in paradise; but being cast down from thence (for they place paradise in heaven) he prayed God, that he might have such a temple on earth, towards which he might pray, and go round it in holy worship unto him, in the same manner as the angels went round that which he had seen in heaven: that thereon God sent down the similitude of that temple in curtains of light, and pitched it at Mecca, in the place where the caaba now stands; which is, say they, exactly under the original, which is in heaven: that there, after the

^b Alcoran, c. 2. Joannes Andreas, c. 2. & c. 6.

^c Alcoran, c. 2.

^d Joannes Andreas, c. 6.

^e Shareftani, Pocockii Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 115. Sionitz Appendix ad Geographiam Nubiensem, c. 7.

death of Adam, Seth built it with stones and clay; and that all the people of God there worshipped till the flood, by which it being overthrown, God commanded Abraham again to rebuild it, having shewn him the form of the fabric in a vision, and directed him to the place by his visible Shechinah residing on it: that accordingly ^f Abraham and Ismael rebuilt it in the place where it now stands: and that Ismael ever after, living at Mecca, there worshipped God with the true worship; but his posterity afterwards corrupted it with idolatry, and profaned this holy temple with idols, from which he was now to purge it, and consecrate it anew to the true worship of God, to which it was primitively intended. And he did not only thus retain the temple of Mecca, but also the pilgrimages thither, and all the absurd rites which were performed at them in the times of idolatry. For these being the things which long use had created a great veneration for in the minds of the Arabians, by adopting them all into his new religion, he made it go down the easier with them. And indeed this was the principal piece of his craft, so to frame his new religion in every particular, as would best take with those to whom he proposed it.

As to this temple of Mecca, and what it was before Mahomet, all that is true of it, is this. It was an heathen temple in the same veneration among the Arabs, that the temple of Delphos was among the Greeks, whither all their ^g tribes, for many ages, came once a year to perform their idolatrous ceremonies to their gods; till at length Mahomet having forced them to exchange their idolatry for another religion altogether

^f Alcoran, c. 2, 3, & 22. Al Jannabi in vita Abrahami, Sharestani, Zamachshari, ad cap. 2. Alcorani. Sharifol Edrifi. Liber Agar. Joannes Andreas, c. 1.

^g Sharestani, Golii Notæ ad Alfraganum, p. 8, & 9. Makrifi. Pocockii Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 177, & 311.

as bad, made this temple also undergo the same change, by appointing it thenceforth to be the chief place for the performing of that false worship which he imposed, in the same manner as it was before of that which he abolished, and so it hath continued ever since.

This same year he also appointed the month of ^h Ramadan to be a month of fast. At his first coming to Medina, ⁱ finding the Jews observing the celebration of their great fast of the expiation on the tenth of their first month, which is Tifri, he asked what it meant; and being told it was a fast appointed by Moses, he replied, that he had more to do with Moses than they; and therefore ordained the tenth day of Moharram, the the first month of the Arab year, to be a solemn fast with his Muslemen in imitation hereof, which by a name also borrowed from the Jews, he called Ashura, which is the same with the Hebrew Ashor, that is, the tenth, it being the ^k tenth day of the month Tifri, on which this fast of the expiation was kept among them. And he did also at first adopt other of their fasts into his religion, hoping by these means to win them over unto him. But finding them still to oppose him all they could, and on all occasions to perplex him and his followers with questions and difficulties about his religion, which he could not find answers for, and on the account hereof to disparage and deride him and his imposture, he contracted that aversion and hatred against them, that he resolved to differ from them ^l in this too, as well as in the particular last mentioned; and therefore abolishing the said fasts, which he had taken from them, in imitation of the Christian way, with whom

^h Abul Pharaghius, p. 102. Al Kodai.

ⁱ Al Kazwini, Pocockii Specim. Hist. Arab. p. 309.

^k Leviticus, c. 16. v. 29. Misna in Tract. Yoma, & Maimonides in Tract. Yom Kippur.

^l Ebnol Athir.

about this time (it seems) he was very desirous to ingratiate himself, he appointed the whole month of Ramadan to be as it were his Lent, or a continued time of solemn fasting. And this year the month of Ramadan beginning in the month of March, it did now exactly fall in with the time of the Christian Lent. But the reason which he himself gives for his appointing of it, was, because ^m on this month, as he pretends, the Alcoran first came down from heaven to him; that is, that chapter of it which he first published. Before, it was a month usually ⁿ dedicated to jollity and good cheer among the Arabs, and while they intercalated the year, always fell in the heat of summer; and therefore it was called Ramadan, ^o because of the *Ramado'l Har*, i. e. *the vehemency of the heat*, which then happened.

The rest of this year ^p he spent in predatory excursions upon his neighbours, robbing, plundering and destroying all those that lived near Medina, who would not come in and embrace his religion.

Heg. 3. June 24. A. D. 624.] The next year he made war ^q upon those tribes of the Arabs, who were of the Jewish religion near him; and having taken their castles, and reduced them under his power, sold them all for slaves, and divided their goods among his followers. He being exceedingly exasperated against Caab, one of their Rabbies, this war was principally undertaken for his sake, that he might take him ^r and put him to death; but not being able to light on him in any of those places which he had taken, he sent out parties to

^m Alcoran, c. 2.

ⁿ Ebn Ahmed, Al Makrizi, Pocockii Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 175.

^o Al Jauhari, Ebnol Athir, Golii Notæ ad Alfraganum, p. 7. Pocockii Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 176.

^p Elmacin. Abul Pharaghius.

^q Elmacin. lib. 1. c. 1.

^r Elmacin. ib.

search after him, ordering them to kill him wherever they should find him. The reason of his * bitter hatred against him was this. Caab was a very eminent poet among the Arabians, and having a brother called Bejair, that had turned Mahometan, he made a very satirical poem upon him for this change, wherein he so terribly galled the Impostor, that he could not bear it, but resolved to revenge the affront with his destruction, if ever he could get him into his hands. For some time Caab escaped all the snares which he laid for him; but after his power had increased so far, that the greater part of Arabia had submitted to him, he found he could be no longer safe, but by making his peace with him; and therefore to purchase it, came in unto him, and professed himself a Mahometan also. Hereon Mahomet bade him repeat that poem which had so much offended him, which he did, putting the name of Abu Beker in every verse, where formerly was the name of Mahomet; but this not doing, Mahomet would not give him his pardon, although at that time he did not take any advantage of his voluntary coming in unto him. Whereon putting his wits to work, he had recourse to this farther device for the obtaining of his security from him. For being informed that Mahomet had lately gotten a new mistress, whom he exceedingly doated upon, and much regretted her absence from him, while then abroad upon the wars; the crafty Jew struck in with this passion for the mollifying of him, and composed an excellent poem in her commendation, which having repeated before him, he so took the heart of the old Lecher thereby, that he not only pardoned him, but also received him into the number of his particular favourites, and made him one of his chief confidants ever after. And as a mark of his favour,

* Ecchelenfis Hist. Arab. part 1. c. 1. & Eutyeb. Vindicat. p. 303, &

then bestowed on him the cloak which he wore ; which being kept by him out of an affected veneration to the Impostor, as an holy relic, was afterwards bought by Moawias, when he came to the empire, for thirty thousand pieces of gold, and was made the robe which he and all his successors of the house of Ommia constantly wore on all solemn occasions. And it is said of this Caab, that he afterwards became so intimate with the Impostor, that he took him into his greatest secrets, even to that of the imposture itself, in composing the Alcoran, for which his great skill in the Arabic language, and all other learning then in use among them, exceedingly qualified him.

Towards the end of this year happened the battle of Ohud, which had like to have proved fatal to the Impostor. For ^c Abu Sophian, to revenge the last year's affront, marched against him with an army of three thousand foot and two hundred horse ; and having seized the mountain of Ohud, ^u which was only four miles distant from Medina, he so distressed that place from thence, that Mahomet was forced to hazard battle to dislodge him from that post, although he could make no more than a thousand men to lead out against him. However, in the first conflict he had the better, but at last being overborne by the number of the enemy, he lost many of his men, and among them, Hamza his uncle, who bore the standard, and was himself grievously wounded in several places, and had been slain, but that Tilha, one of his companions, and nephew to Abu Beker, came in to his rescue, in which action ^x he received a wound in his hand, which deprived him of the use of some of his fingers ever after.

To solve the objections which were raised against him on

^c Elmacin. lib. 1. c. 1. Abul Pharaghius, p. 102.

^u Geographia Nubienfis, Clim. 2. part 5.

^x Disputatio Christiani, c. 5. with which compare Abul Pharaghius, p. 117. For there it is said Tilha had a lame hand.

this defeat, he was much put to it. Some † argued against him, how he that was a prophet of God, and so much in his favour as he pretended, could be overthrown in battle by the infidels? And others murmured as much for the loss of their friends and relations who were slain in the battle. To satisfy the former, he laid the cause of the overthrow on the sins of some that followed him; and said, that for this reason God suffered them to be overthrown, that so the good might be distinguished from the bad, and those who were true believers might on this occasion be discerned from those who were not. And to still the complaints and clamours of the latter, he invented his doctrine of fate and destiny, telling them that those who were slain in the battle, though they had tarried at home in their houses, must have died notwithstanding when they did, the time of every man's life being predestinated and determined by God, beyond which no caution is able in the least to prolong it; that the destiny of all is stated to an hour, which cannot be altered; and therefore those who were slain in the battle, died no sooner than they must otherwise have done; but in that they died fighting for the faith, they gained the advantage of the crown of martyrdom, and the rewards which were due thereto in paradise, where he told them they were alive with God in everlasting bliss, which was of greater advantage than all the treasures of the world could in this life have been unto them: that they were there rejoicing very much, that they had laid down their life so happily, as by thus fighting in the cause of God, and his law, and were expressing among themselves exceeding gladness, that those who ran to hinder them from going to the battle, met them not. Both which doctrines he found so well to serve his turn, that he propagated them on all occasions after. And they have been

† Alcoran, c. 3.

the darling ² notions of all this sect ever since, especially in their wars, where certainly nothing can be more conducive to make them fight valiantly, than a settled opinion, that whatever dangers they expose themselves to, they cannot die either sooner or later than is otherwise unalterably predetermined that they must; and that in case this predetermined time be come, in dying fighting for their religion, they shall obtain that happiness, as to become martyrs thereby, and immediately enter into paradise for the reward hereof.

Heg. 4. June 13. A. D. 625.] In the fourth year of the Hegira he waged war ^a with the Nadorites, a tribe of the Jewish Arabs in his neighbourhood, whom he pressed so hard, that he forced them to leave their castles; part of them retiring to Chaibar, a city belonging to those of their religion; and part flying into Syria. Those latter that fled into Syria, Mundir Ebn Omar, with a party of the men of Medina, pursued after, and having overtaken them near the borders of that country, put them all to the sword, excepting only one man that escaped. With such cruelty did those barbarians first set up to fight for that imposture they had been deluded into. This same year he fought the second battle of Beder, and had many other skirmishes with those who refused to submit to him, in which he had sometimes prosperous, and sometimes dubious success.

But while his army was abroad on these expeditions, some of his principal men engaging at play and drink, in the heat of their cups fell a quarrelling, which raised such a disturbance among the rest of his men, that they had like to have fallen all together by the ears, to the confounding of him and all his

^a Ricaut's History of the Present State of the Ottoman Empire, Book 2. c. 8.

^a Elmacin. lib. 1. c. 1. Abul Pharaghius, p. 102.

designs; and therefore for the preventing the like mischief for the future, ^b he forbade the use of wine, and all games of chance ever after. And to make his prohibition the more influential, he backs it with a ^c fable of two angels, called Arut and Marut, who he tells us were in times past sent down from heaven to administer justice, and teach men righteousness in the province of Babylon; that while they were there, a certain woman coming to them for justice, invited them home to dinner, and set wine before them, which God had forbidden them to drink; but being tempted by the pleasantness of the liquor to transgress the divine command, they became so drunk, that they tempted the woman to lewdness; who promised to consent, on condition that the one of them should first carry her to heaven, and the other bring her back again. But the woman being got to heaven would not come back again, but declared to God the whole matter. Whereupon, for reward of her chastity, she was made the morning-star. And the angels having this option given them, whether they would be punished for their wickedness, either now, or hereafter, chose the former: whereupon they were hung up by the feet by an iron chain in a certain pit near Babylon, where they are to continue suffering the punishment of their transgression till the day of judgment. And that for this reason God forbade the use of wine to all his servants ever after. But ^d Busbequius, and out of him ^e Ricaut give the reason of

^b Al Kodai, Pocockii Specim. Hist. Arab. p. 175. Alcoran, c. 5. Fortalit. Fid. lib. 4. Confid. 5.

^c Alcoran, c. 2. Zamachshari and Bidayi, alique Commentatores ad illud caput. Dialogus Mahometis cum Abdollah, Richardi Confutatio Legis Saracenicae, c. 4. Cantacuzen. Orat. 2. § 15. Bellonius, l. 3. c. 6. Gadagnol. Traët. 2. c. 4. e Libro Agar.

^d Epist. 9.

^e History of the Present State of the Ottoman Empire, Book 2. c. 25.

his forbidding the use of wine from another occasion; which they thus relate; ‘ Mahomet making a journey to a friend of his at noon entered into his house, where there was a marriage feast; and sitting down with the guests, he observed them to be very merry and jovial, kissing and embracing one another, which was attributed to the cheerfulness of their spirits raised by the wine, so that he blessed it as a sacred thing in being thus an instrument of much love among men. But returning to the same house the next day, he beheld another face of things, as gore-blood on the ground, an hand cut off, an arm, foot, and other limbs dismembered, which was told was the effect of the brawls and fighting, occasioned by the wine, which made them mad, and inflamed them into a fury, thus to destroy one another. Whereon he changed his mind, and turned his former blessing into a curse, and forbade it ever after to all his disciples.’ But he himself seems totally to refer the reason of the prohibition, to the quarrel which wine and play at games of chance had caused among them. For in the 5th chapter of the Alcoran, where he gives his law concerning this matter, his words are, ‘ the devil desires to sow dissension and hatred among you, through wine and games of chance, to divert you from remembering God, and praying unto him. Abandon wine and games of chance. Be obedient to God, and the prophet his apostle, and take heed to yourselves.’ The truth of the matter is, the Arabians † were given to drink wine to great excess, when they could come by it; and being of an hot temper, as living most of them within the Torrid Zone, were liable to be inflamed by it into the highest disorders; and this Mahomet having had sufficient experience of, particularly in the danger-

† Ecchelenfis Hist. Arab. Part 1. c. 5. Richardi Confutatio, 8.

ous instance I have mentioned, did, in respect of his Arabians, prudently enough provide against the like mischief for the future, by thus taking away the cause from whence it did flow.

Heg. 5. June 2. A. D. 627.] The next year was the war of the Ditch, where Mahomet was in great danger of being totally ruined. For the men of Mecca having entered into confederacy with several of the tribes of the Jewish Arabians, to whom he had declared himself a mortal enemy & marched against him under the command of Joseph, the brother of Abu Sophian, with an army of ten thousand men. Mahomet marched forth to meet them; but being terrified with their number, by the advice of Abdollah Ebn Salem, the Persian Jew above mentioned (whom Elmacinus calls Salman) fortified himself with a deep ditch, within which intrenchment the enemy besieged him many days, which time the crafty Impostor employed to corrupt over to his interest their leading men. In which attempt having succeeded with some of them, he did, by their means, sow such dissensions among the rest, as soon extricated him from all this danger he was fallen into, which happened on this occasion. There was then in the enemies camp, ^h Amrus Ebn Abdud, an eminent Korashite, and uncle to Ali, who having the reputation of being the best horseman in Arabia, to shew his manhood while the two armies lay thus idle against each other, rode up to Mahomet's trenches, and challenged any of his army to fight with him in a single combat. Ali, although his nephew, accepts the challenge; and having slain Amrus, and also another that came to his assistance, those whom Mahomet's instruments had wrought into a dissension from the rest, took this opportunity ⁱ to desert the camp, and march home. Whose example the

^g Elmacin. lib. 1. c. 1. Abul Pharaghius, p. 102.

^h Ecchelenfis, Hist. Arab. p. 1. c. 3. Abul Pharaghius, p. 102.

ⁱ Abul Pharaghius, p. 102. Elmacin. lib. 1. c. 1.

rest in this consternation following, the whole army broke up, and separated. And so this war, from which so much was expected, ended in nothing but the loss of six men on Mahomet's side, and three on the other.

But though the enemy could make no use of the advantage they had, yet ^k Mahomet knew how to make the best of that which they gave him by this retreat. And therefore immediately marching after the Cozaites, one of the Jewish tribes confederated against him, besieged them in their fortresses, and forced them to surrender at mercy to Saad Ebn Saad, one of his chief commanders. But he being sore of a wound he had received at the war of the Ditch, in revenge thereof caused all the men, and among them Hahib Ebn Atab their chief commander, to be put to the sword, and the women and children to be sold for slaves, and all their goods to be given for a prey unto his soldiers; and as soon as this was executed, died himself of the wound, which he had thus cruelly revenged.

Heg. 6. May 23. A. D. 627.] In the sixth year he subdued ^l the Lahianites, the Mustalachites, and several other tribes of the Arabs. The Mustalachites were of the posterity of the Chozaites, whom Cofa expelled out of Mecca. ^m Mahomet having overthrown them in battle, slew most of the men, according to his bloody manner, and took their wives and children captives, among whom finding Juweira, the daughter of Hareth, a woman of excellent beauty, ⁿ he fell in love with her, and took her to him to wife, and for her sake released all of her kindred that were found among the captives.

And now the Impostor, after so many advantages obtained

^k Elmacin. lib. 1. c. 1.

^l Abul Pharaghius, p. 102. Elmacin. lib. 1. c. 1.

^m Abul Feda, Pocockii Specim. Hist. Arab. p. 42.

ⁿ Elmacin. lib. 1. c. 1.

in his wars, being much increased in strength ^o marched his army against Mecca, and at Hadibia, a place near that city, on the road from thence to Jodda, a battle was fought between them, the consequence of which was, that neither side gaining any advantage over the other, they there agreed on a truce for ten years: the conditions of which were, that all within Mecca, who were for Mahomet, might have liberty to join themselves to him; and on the other side, those with Mahomet, who had a mind to leave him, and return to their houses in Mecca, might also have the same liberty. But for the future, if any of the citizens of Mecca should go over to Mahomet without the consent of the governor of the city, he should be bound on demand to render them unto him. And that if Mahomet, or any of his party, had a mind to come into the city, they might have liberty so to do at any time during the truce, provided they came unarmed in a peaceable way, and tarried not above three days at a time.

By this truce Mahomet being very much confirmed in his power, took on him ^p thenceforth the authority of a king, and was inaugurated by the chief men of his army, under a tree near Medina, which immediately (it seems, cursed by the authority given so wicked an Impostor under it) withered away and perished, which the Mahometans themselves relate, but make another interpretation of it.

On Mahomet's having thus made truce with the men of Mecca, and thereby obtained free access for any of his party to come into that city, he thenceforth ordained them to make their ^q pilgrimages thither, which have ever since with so much religion been observed by all of his sect, once every year. This was an ancient rite of the heathen Arabs, it having been

^r Elmacin, lib. 1. c. 1.

^p Elmacin. *ibid.*

Al Kodai, Pocockii Specim. Hist. Arab. p. 175.

a constant usage ^r among them for many ages foregoing to come once a year to the temple of Mecca, there to worship their heathen deities. The time of this their pilgrimage ^s was in the month of Dulhaga; and on the tenth day of that month was their great festival, in which the chiefest solemnities of their pilgrimage were performed, and therefore it was called *Ayd al Cabir*, i. e. *the great feast*; and also, because these solemnities did chiefly consist in offering up sacrifices and oblations, *Ayd al Corban*, that is, *the feast of oblation*; and the whole solemnity, *Al Hughha*, i. e. *the solemn festival*, in the same sense as the Hebrew word *Chag*, from which it is derived, signifieth any of the three solemn festivals, on which the Jews were thrice every year to appear before the Lord at the temple of Jerusalem. And from hence the month in which this festival falls, is called among them *Dulhagha*, which is as much as to say, *the month of the solemn festival*. And that all might have free liberty safely to come to this festival from all parts of Arabia, and again safely return, was the reason that not only this month, but also the preceding and following were held sacred among them, in which it was not lawful to use any act of hostility against any man, as I have afore shewn. And therefore this solemn pilgrimage to Mecca having been a religious usage, which all the tribes of the Arabs had long been devoted to, and was had in great veneration among them, Mahomet thought not fit to ruffle them with any innovation in this matter, but adopting it into his religion, retained it just in the same manner as he found it practised among them, with all the ridiculous rites appendant thereto; and so it is observed even unto this day by all of that religion, as one of the funda-

^r Vide supra ad Annum Hegiræ secundum.

^s Sharestani, Makrizi, Goli Notæ ad Alfraganum, p. 8, & 9. Pocockii Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 177.

mental duties of it. For the crafty Impostor taught them concerning it (as he did of all the other heathen rites of the Arabs, which he found necessary to retain) that it was a command from God to Abraham and Ismael, annually to observe this pilgrimage to Mecca; and that it was given unto them on their rebuilding the caaba; and that at first it was only used to the honour of God, in the coming of all the Arabs thither once every year, there to worship together before him in one holy assembly, in the same manner as the Jews were after commanded thrice every year to worship before him in their three solemn festivals at Jerusaleem: but that in process of time it became perverted to idolatry, from which he was now commanded again to restore it to its primitive use. And in the making of this establishment, he had no small respect to his native city, that he might preserve to it the same benefit of this pilgrimage, which it had before so long enjoyed. And in thus providing for the interest of that people in the very religion which he was a-framing, he thought he might the easier prevail to draw them over unto it. And in this he was not mistaken. For had he totally abolished this pilgrimage, it being the greatest honour and benefit which that place enjoyed, and by which, indeed, it did mostly subsist; their interest would have engaged them to that vigorous opposition against him, that in all likelihood he would never have become master of that city, and for want thereof have miscarried in the whole design.

Heg. 7. May 11. A. D. 628.] And now being thus established in the sovereignty, which he had been so long driving at, he took to him all the insignia belonging thereto; but so that still he retained the sacred character of chief pontiff of his religion, as well as the royal, which he had now invested himself with, and transmitted them both together to all his successors, who by the title of Caliphs reigned after him; so

that they were in the same manner as the Jewish princes of the race of the Maccabees, kings and chief priests of their people at the same time. Their pontifical authority chiefly consisted in giving the interpretation of the Mahometan law, in ordering all matters of religion, and also in officiating in the duties of it themselves, as well in praying as preaching in their public mosques, as on all more solemn occasions they were used to do. And at length this was all the authority the Caliphs were left possessed of, they being totally stripped of all the rest, first by the governors of the provinces ^t (who about the year of the Hegira 325. assumed the regal authority to themselves, and made themselves kings each in their particular government) and after by others, who rose up on this distraction of the empire to usurp upon them, till at last they left them nothing else but the name and shadow of what they had afore been. For although those princes still paid some deference to the Caliph, as to a sacred person (in the same manner as is now paid to the Pope of Rome by the princes of his communion) and suffered him to be prayed for through all the mosques of their dominions, and his name to be inserted in the public offices, even before their own, as if they had still been no more than his lieutenants in the government, as in former times; yet as to all things relating to the government of their particular states, they disowned all manner of obedience unto him, and often deposed him, and put another in his stead, as they thought would best suit with their interest; which was usually done, according as this prince or that prince made themselves masters of Bagdat, the city where the Caliph resided, till at length the Tartars came in, and in that deluge of destruction, with which they did over-run all the East, put a total end to

^t Elmacin, lib. 3. c. 1. Abul Pharaghius, &c.

their ^u very name and being, as well as their authority. Ever since that time, most Mahometan princes have a particular officer appointed in their respective dominions, who sustains this sacred authority, formerly invested in the Caliphs, who in Turkey is called the Mufti, and in Persia the Sadre; but they being under the power of the princes that appoint them, are most an end made use of for no other purpose, but as tools of state to serve their interest, and make the law speak what at any time they shall judge most agreeable to it, how wicked and unjust soever it be.

As soon as Mahomet had finished his mosque at Medina, he always, if in the place, officiated in it himself, both in praying, and also in preaching to the people; for which he had no other convenience at first, than a piece of a beam, or the stump of a palm-tree driven into the ground, on the top of which he leaned when he did officiate. But being now invested with the supreme authority, he thought this too mean an accommodation for his dignity; and therefore, by the advice of one of his wives, caused a pulpit to be built for him, which had two steps up into it, and a seat within to sit on; and this the Impostor ever after made use of, leaving his beam. And those, who, writing of Mahomet's miracles, tell us, among others, that a beam groaned at him, ^x mean this beam, which they say groaned at Mahomet's leaving of it, thereby expressing its grief for being thus deserted. Othman Ebn Affan, when he came to be Caliph, hung his pulpit with tapestry, and Moawias advanced it higher, adding six steps more to it. For being ^y so exceeding fat that he could not stand while he officiated, as all his predecessors had done, he was forced to

^u Abul Pharaghius, p. 339.

^x Al Gazali, Pocockii Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 188.

^y Elmacin, lib. 1. c. 7. Eutychius, Tom. 2. p. 360. Abul Pharaghius, p. 124.

fit when he preached to the people; and therefore that he might be the better heard, he raised the pulpit to this height, and so it now remains in that mosque at Medina even to this day.

This year he led forth his army ^z against Chaibar, a city inhabited by Arabs of the Jewish religion, who being overthrown by him in battle, he besieged their city, and took it by storm. And here those who are the magnifiers of Ali, tell this miracle of him, that in the assault, Samson-like, he plucked up one of the gates of the city (which was of that weight, saith Abul Feda, that eight other men could not move it) and held it before him for a shield to defend himself against the besieged, till the city was taken. On Mahomet's entering the town, he took up his quarters in the house of Horeth, one of the principal inhabitants of the place, whose daughter ^a Zainah, making ready a shoulder of mutton for his supper, poisoned it. And here those who are for ascribing miracles to Mahomet, tell us that the shoulder of mutton spoke to him, and discovered that it was poisoned; but it seems, if it did so, it was too late to do him any good. For Basier, one of his companions, falling on too greedily to eat of it, fell down dead on the place. And although Mahomet had not immediately the same fate, because not liking the taste, he spit out again what he had taken into his mouth, yet he let down enough to do his business. For he was never well after this supper, and at three years end died of it. The maid being asked why she did this, answered, that she had a mind to make trial whether he were a prophet, or no. For were he a prophet, said she, he could certainly know that the meat was poisoned; and

^z Abul Pharaghius, p. 102. Elmacin. lib. 1. c. 1.

^a Abul Feda, Al Kodai, Al Jannabi, Disputatio Christiani, c. 8. Richardi Confutatio, c. 13. Pocockii Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 189, 190.

therefore would receive no harm from it ; but if he were not a prophet, she thought she should do the world good service, in ridding it of so wicked a tyrant.

After this ^b he reduced under his subjection Beder, Watiha, and Selalima, which were also towns belonging to the Jewish Arabs, who rendered to him on articles ; and these were, that they should continue in their former habitations, paying for tribute one half of the income of their date trees every year ; but to be at his discretion to expel them when he should think fit. Under the protection of which agreement they still retained their former possessions, and dwelt in them without any disturbance, till the reign of Omar, who pretending that Mahomet had given charge in his last sickness not to permit two religions in Arabia, drove them all out.

Heg. 8. April 30. A. D. 629.] The Impostor, by those many acquisitions having now increased his strength to an army of ten thousand men, resolved to make himself master of Mecca ; and therefore pretending they had broken the truce, ^c marched suddenly upon them before they were aware of his design ; and therefore being totally unprovided in that surprise to put themselves into a posture of defence against him, they found themselves necessitated to yield to him. Whereon Abu Sophian taking with him Al Abbas, one of the uncles of the Impostor (who, although of his religion, had, it seems, tarried still at Mecca) went out unto him, and by turning Mahometan, saved his life ; and the city, without any opposition, was rendered to him at discretion. On his entry into it, having put to death such as had been most violent against him, all the rest, without any further opposition, submitted unto him, and embraced his religion. And therefore having thus

^b Elmacin. lib. 1. c. 1.

^c Abul Pharaghius, p. 103. Elmacinus, lib. 1. c. 1.

made himself absolute master of the place, he immediately set himself to purge the caaba of its idols, and consecrate that temple a-new to his religion, as having resolved still to continue it in its pristine honour, by making it the chief place of worship for all of his sect. There ^d were a multitude of idols within the temple, and as many without, standing round its area, all which Mahomet caused to be pulled down and destroyed, and the place to be totally cleared of them. The chief among those idols, were those of Abraham and Ismael within the temple, and that of Hoball without. The rest were of angels and prophets, and others of their principal saints departed, whom they worshipped only as mediators, in the same manner as the Romanists now do their saints, and the images which they erect unto them. For the Arabians always held, that there was ^e but one only God, the Creator and Governor of all things, whom they called *Allah Taal*, i. e. the *Supreme God*, and *God of gods*, and *Lord of lords*, whom they durst never represent by any image. But being (as they held) so great and high as not to be approached to by men while here on earth, but through the mediation of advocates or intercessors, interposing for them unto him in heaven; that angels and holy men beatified might perform this office for them, was the reason that they set up their images, and built them temples, and directed their worship and devotions unto them. And in this did consist the whole of the Arabian idolatry, which Mahomet, now by destroying these idols, put a total end unto.

As soon as it was heard among the neighbouring Arabs, that Mahomet had made himself master of Mecca, the ^f Hawazins,

^d Pocockii Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 95, 96, 97, 98.

^e Pocockii Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 107, & 108.

^f Elmacin. lib. 1. c. 1.

the Thakifians, and several other tribes, immediately gathered together under the command of Melec Ebn Auf, to fall upon him before he should increase his power any further. Hereupon Mahomet, appointing Gayat Ebn Afad to be governor of Mecca, marched out against them with twelve thousand men. In the valley of Honaina, which lieth between Mecca and Tayif, both armies met, and in the first encounter Mahomet ^g was beaten, though much superior to the enemy in number, and driven back to the walls of Mecca, ^h which he ascribes to the over-confidence of his men in their numbers; which causing them to neglect their enemy, did thereby give them this advantage over them. But the Impostor ⁱ having gathered up his scattered forces, and rallied them again into a body, acted more cautiously in the second conflict; and then ^k as he saith, by the help of invisible troops of angels (which are reckoned by some commentators on the Alcoran, to be eight thousand, and by others to be sixteen thousand) gave his enemies such a total defeat, ^l that he took from them their baggage, with their wives and children, and all their substance, which consisted mostly of great flocks of sheep, and herds of cattle. For these being of the Nomad Arabs, it was their custom to carry wives and children, and all that they had with them, wherever they moved. After this battle, these people sent ambassadors unto him to pray the restitution of their wives and children; to whom Mahomet gave this option, to chuse which they would have again restored unto them, either their wives and children, or their goods: whereon they having chosen their wives and children, Mahomet divided all their goods, which he had taken from them, among his soldiers.

^g Zamachshari, and Bidawi on the 9th chapter of the Alcoran.

^h Alcoran, c. 9:

^k Alcoran, c. 9.

ⁱ Bidawi & Zamachshari, ib.

^l Elmacin. lib. 1. c. 1.

Only Melec Ebn Auf, their general, now he saw his power was such as no more to be resisted, came in and embraced his religion, and thereon had all his goods again restored unto him.

The remaining part of the year ^m was spent in demolishing the heathen temples, and destroying their idols in all places through Arabia, where his power reached. To which purpose, several of his commanders being sent out with parties, Saad destroyed the idol of Menah; Chalid, that of Al Uzza, and the temple of Boffa built thereto, and others the rest of them. So that this year proved very fatal to the idols of the Arabs, they being most of them now destroyed, and the former worshippers of them forced to submit to Mahomet, and embrace his imposture.

Heg. 9. April 20. A. D. 630.] And now having brought most parts of Arabia under his power, the ensuing year ⁿ he turned his arms towards Syria, and possessed himself of Tabuc, a town belonging to the Greek empire, and from thence falling on the princes of Dauman and Eyla, forced them to become tributaries unto him, and then returned to Medina in the month Rajeb. While he was absent on this expedition, the Tayifians, whom he had begun to besiege the former year, being much pressed by some of his lieutenants, whom he had committed the prosecution of that war unto, were forced to submit and embrace his imposture, which they had afore been so averse unto; of which he having received an account on his return, he sent thither Abu Sophian to disarm them of all their weapons and instruments of war, and appointed Othman Ebn Abulas to be their governor. And this was the last year in which he went to the war.

^m Pocockii Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 91, & 92.

ⁿ Abul Pharaghius, p. 103. Elmacinus, lib. 1. c. 1.

Heg. 10. April 9. A. D. 631.] And now the power of the Impostor being much increased, the fame of it so terrified the rest of the Arabs, which had not yet felt his arms, ° that they all came in and submitted to him, and embraced his imposture. So that this year his empire and his religion became established together through all Arabia, and he sent his lieutenants into all parts of it to govern in his name, who destroying the idol temples, and all other the remains of the Arabian idolatry, wherever they came, set up his new invented religion in its stead, and forced all men, by the power of the sword, to conform thereto.

The greatest part of this year being spent in ordering and settling these matters, p towards the end of it Mahomet took a journey in pilgrimage to Mecca, and entered there on the tenth day of Dulhagha, which is the great day of that solemnity, where a great concourse of people resorted to him from all parts of Arabia, whom he instructed in his law, and then returned again to Medina. This pilgrimage of his is by his followers called the *pilgrimage of valediction*, because it was the last which he made.

But although he was arrived to this height, yet he wanted not opposers, who gave him great disturbance in this his new-acquired empire. For several others seeing how he had advanced himself to be a great king, by pretending to be a prophet, thought to do so too. q Among whom the chief was Mosailema, who set himself up with this pretence in the country of Yamama, and gathering a great company after him, preached to them that he was associate with Mahomet in the prophetic office, and sent with the same commission to reduce

° Elmacin. lib. 1. c. 1. Abul Feda.

p Elmacin. lib. 1. c. 1. Abul Feda, Abul Pharaghius, p. 103.

q Abul Pharaghius, p. 103. Elmacin. lib. 1. c. 1. & 2. Disputatio Christiani, c. 17.

them from idolatry to the true worship of God, and in order thereto he also published his Alcoran among them. For which reason the Mahometans call him the *lying Mofailema*, and speak of him always with detestation. However, he increased to a very considerable power, leading a great army after him. † And at the same time Aswad started up in Hamyar, or the country of the Homerites, with the same pretence, and seized on Sanaa, Nafra, and Tayif. And after him Teliha, and others thought to have played the same game, but could not hit on the same success, being all in their turns subdued and brought to nothing. But this work Mahomet not being able to undertake himself, was forced to leave it to his successor.

Heg. 11. March 28. A. D. 632.] For after his return ‡ to Medina from his late pilgrimage, he began daily to decline, through the force of that poison which he had taken three years before at Caibar, which still working in him, at length brought him so low, as forced him on the 28th day of Saphar (the second month of their year) to take his bed, and on the twelfth day of the following month he died, after having been sick thirteen days. The beginning of his sickness was a slow fever, which at length made him delirious; whereon † he called for a pen, ink, and paper, telling them that he would dictate a book to them, which should keep them from erring after his death. But Omar would not admit this, saying the Alcoran sufficeth, and that the prophet, through the greatness of his malady, knew not what he said. But others who were

† Elmacin. lib. 1. c. 1, &c.

‡ Abul Pharaghius, p. 103. Elmacin. lib. 1. c. 1. Eutychius, Tom. 2. p. 251. Abul Feda, Al Jannabi, Al Kodai, Shareftani, &c.

† Bochari, Shareftani, Al Jannabi, Pocockii Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 178, 179.

present, were of another mind, and expressed a great desire that the book might be wrote, which their prophet spoke to them of; whereon a contention arose between them, some being of Omar's mind, and some of the contrary; at which Mahomet taking offence, bid them all be gone, telling them, that it did not become them thus to contend in his presence. So the book was not wrote; the loss of which was afterwards lamented by some of his followers, as a great calamity to their cause.

During his sickness, ^u he much complained of that bit which he had taken at Caibar, telling those that came to visit him, that he had felt the torments of it in his body ever since; that at times it brought on him very dolorous pains, and that then it was going to break his very heart-strings. And when, among others, there came to see him the mother of Bashar, who died on the spot of that poison, ^x he cried out, 'O mother of Bashar, the veins of my heart are now breaking of the bit which I eat with your son at Caibar.' So it seems, notwithstanding the intimacy he pretended with the angel Gabriel, and the continual revelations which he bragged that he received from him, he could not be preserved from thus perishing by the snares of a silly girl.

On his death, there was great confusion among his followers. Many of them ^y would not believe that he could die. 'For' said they 'how can he die, since he is to be a witness to God for us? It cannot be so, he is not dead, but is only taken away for a season, and will return again, as did Jesus.' And therefore they went to the door of the house where the dead corps lay, crying out, 'do not bury him, for the apostle of God

^u Abul Feda, Ebnol Athir, Ebn Phares, Al Jannabi.

^x Al Jannabi, Pocockii Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 190.

^y Abul Feda, Shareftani, Al Jannabi, Pocockii Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 179.

'is not dead. And Omar being of the same mind, drew his sword, and swore, that if any one should say that Mahomet was dead, he would immediately cut them to pieces. 'For' said he 'the apostle of God is not dead, but only gone for a season; as Moses the son of Amram was gone from the people of Israel for forty days, and then returned to them again.' For the composing of this disorder, Abu Beker came in, crying out unto them, 'Do you worship Mahomet, or the God of Mahomet? If you worship the God of Mahomet, he is immortal, and liveth for ever; but as to Mahomet, he certainly is dead.' And then from several passages in the Alcoran, he proved that he must die as well as other men. Which having satisfied Omar and his party, they then all took it for granted that Mahomet was dead, and no more to return to life again till the general resurrection of all mankind. What goes so current among us, as if the Mahometans expected Mahomet again to return to them here on earth, is totally an error. There is no such doctrine among them, nor are there any of them that ever fancied such a thing, since the time that Omar was convinced of his mistake herein.

But this disorder was no sooner appeased,² but another arose to a much greater heat about his burial. The Mohagerins, that is, those who accompanied him in his flight from Mecca, would have him carried thither, to be buried in the place where he was born. The Ansars, that is, those of Medina, who joined with him, would have him buried there where he died. And there were others who had a fancy to have him carried to Jerusalem, and there buried among the sepulchres of the prophets: for that, said they, was the city of the prophets. And while each party strove to have their own way

² Abul Pharaghius, p. 103. Ahmed Ebn Yusef, Abul Feda, Sharefani, Pocockii Specim. Hist. Arab. p. 180.

complied with, the contest grew so high, that they had like to have all gone together by the ears ; but that the wisdom of Abu Beker composed this matter also. For he coming in, told them, that he had often heard from the prophet himself, that prophets were to be buried in the place where they died. And then without more ado, commanded the bed whereon he lay to be plucked out, and a grave to be immediately dug under it, to which all consented, and there they buried him forthwith in the place where he died, which was in the chamber of Ayesha, his best beloved wife, at Medina ; and there he lieth to this day, without iron coffin or loadstones to hang him in the air, as the stories which commonly go about of him among Christians fabulously relate. There was, indeed, ^a one Dinocrates, a famous architect, that had a device, by building the dome of the temple of Arfinoe at Alexandria of loadstone, to make her image all of iron, hang in the middle of it, as if it were in the air ; but there was no such attempt ever made as to Mahomet's carcase. For that being buried in the manner as I have related, hath lain in the same place, without being moved or disturbed ever since, only they have built over it ^b a small chapel, which joineth to one of the corners of the chief mosque of that city, which was the first that was ever erected to that impious superstition, Mahomet himself being the first founder of it, as hath been afore related. Here such pilgrims as think fit, on their return from Mecca, call in to pay their devotions. But there is no obligation from their law for it. The pilgrimage which that enjoins being to be performed to the caaba at Mecca, and not to the tomb of the Impostor at Medina, as some have erroneously related.

^a Plinius, l. 34. c. 14.

^b Appendix ad Geographiam Nubiensem, c. 8. Thevenot, Part 1. Book 2. c. 21.

And thus ended the life of this wicked Impostor ^c being full sixty-three years old on the day in which he died, that is, according to the Arabian account, which make only sixty-one of our years. For twenty-three years he had taken upon him to be a prophet, of which he lived thirteen at Mecca, and ten at Medina. During which time, from very mean beginnings, he arose by the impulse of his ambition, and the sagaciousness of his wit to that height, as to make one of the greatest revolutions that ever happened in the world, which immediately gave birth to an empire, which in eighty years time extended its dominions over more kingdoms and countries, than ever the Roman could in eight hundred. And although it continued in its strength not much above three hundred years, yet out of its ashes have sprung up many other kingdoms and empires, of which there are three at this day, the largest and most potent upon the face of the earth; I mean the empire of Turkey, the empire of Persia, and the empire of the Mogul in India; which God hath permitted of his all-wise providence still to continue for a scourge unto us Christians, who, having received so holy and so excellent a religion through his mercy to us in Jesus Christ our Lord, will not yet conform ourselves to live worthy of it.

He ^d was, as to his person, of a proper stature, and comely aspect, and affected much to be thought to resemble Abraham. He had a very piercing and sagacious wit. And for the accomplishing of the design which he undertook, was thoroughly versed in all the arts whereby to insinuate into the favour of men, and wheedle them over to serve his purposes, to which he chiefly owed the success of his undertaking.

^c Eutychius, Tom. 2. p. 251. Elmacin. lib. 1. c. 1. Abul Pharaghius, p. 103. Abul Feda, Al Jannabi, Al Kodai, &c.

^d Elmacin. lib. 1. c. 1. Abunazar, Abul Feda, Al Kodai, Schikardi Tarich, p. 32.

For the first part of his life ^e he led a very wicked and licentious course, much delighting in rapine, plunder, and bloodshed, according to the usage of the Arabs, who mostly followed this kind of life, being almost continually in arms one tribe against another, to plunder and take from each other all they could. However, the Mahometans would have us believe that he was a saint from the fourth year of his age. For then, say ^f they, the angel Gabriel took him from among his fellows, while at play with them, and carrying him aside, cut open his breast, and took out his heart, and wrung out of it that black drop of blood, in which, say they, was contained the *fomes peccati*, so that he had none of it ever after. And yet in the forty-eighth chapter of his Alcoran, he brings in God giving him a large charter of pardon for all his sins past and to come.

His two predominant passions were ambition and lust. The course which he took to gain empire, abundantly shews the former; and the multitude of women which he had to do with, proves the latter. And indeed these two run through the whole frame of his religion, there being scarce a chapter in his Alcoran, which doth not lay down some law of war and bloodshed for the promoting of the one; or else give some liberty for the use of women here, or some promise for the enjoyment of them hereafter, to the gratifying of the other.

While Cadigha lived (which was till the fiftieth year of his age) I do not find that he took any other wife. For she being the rise and foundation of his fortunes, it seems he durst not displease her, by bringing in another wife upon her. But she was no sooner dead, but he multiplied them to a great ^g num-

^e Bartholomæus Edeffenus, *Disputatio Christiani*, &c.

^f *Liber de Generatione & nutritura Mahometis*, Joannes Andreas, c. 1. Bellonius, l. 3. c. 1. Guadagnol, p. 169. e libro Agar. Ecchelenfis, *Hist. Arab.* part 1. c. 23.

^g *Appendix ad Geographiam Nubiensem*, c. 8. Joannes Andreas, c. 7. Bellonius, l. 3, &c.

, besides several concubines which he had. They that say the fewest, allow him to have married ^b fifteen; but others reckon them to have been ⁱ one and twenty, of which five died before him, six he repudiated, and ten were alive at his death. But the tenth, with whom he contracted but a little before his sickness, was never brought home to his house. The names of the other nine were Ayesha, the daughter of Abu Beker; Haphsa, the daughter of Omar; Zewda, the daughter of Zama; Zainab, the daughter of Hafheth; Jeweira, the daughter of Hareth; Sephiah, the daughter of Hai; Em Selema, Em Haliba, and Maimuna.

Ayesha, the daughter of Abu Beker, was his best beloved wife. He married her very young, as hath been before related; and although she was a very wanton woman, and ^k given to hold amorous intrigues with other men, and on that account Mahomet was moved to put her away; yet his love to her was such, that he could not part with her. But to save her reputation, and his own in keeping her, the twenty-fourth chapter of the Alcoran was composed, and brought forth as sent from God to declare her innocent; wherein he tells his muslemans, that this charge against her was an imposture, and an impudent lie, and forbids them any more to speak of it, threatening a severe curse, both in this life and that which is to come, against all those who should accuse of immodesty, women chaste, innocent and faithful. Mahomet marrying her young, took care to have her bred up ^l in all the learning then going in Arabia, especially in the elegance of their language, and the knowledge of their antiquities, and she became one of the most accomplished ladies of her

^b Abul Feda, Al Kodai, Ahmed Ebn Yusef.

ⁱ Vide Gentium in Notis ad Musladinum Sadum, p. 568.

^k Disputatio Christiani, c. 6. Commentatores in Alcorani c. 24.

^l Appendix ad Geographiam Nubiensem, c. 8.

time in that country. She was a^m bitter enemy to Ali, he being the person that discovered her incontinency to Mahomet, and therefore employed all the interest she had on every vacancy that after happened, to hinder him from being chosen Caliph, although, as son-in-law to the Impostor, he had the fairest pretence thereto; and when at last, after having been thrice put by, he attained that dignity, she appeared in arms against him; and although she prevailed not that way, yet she proved his ruin, by causing that defection from him, which at length was the undoing of him and all his house. Sheⁿ lived forty-eight years after the death of Mahomet, and was in great reputation with her sect, being called by them the *prophets*, and the *mother of the faithful*. And in most points of difficulty concerning their law, they had recourse to her, to know what had been the sense of the Impostor while alive, in the particular doubted of; and whatsoever answer she gave, went for an^o authentic tradition among them ever after. For all their traditions which compose their Sonnah, are pretended to be derived either from her, or some of Mahomet's ten companions; that is, those ten who first came in unto him. But her testimony to a tradition is reckoned the most authentic; and next her, that of Abdorrahman Ebn Auf. For^p being of all others the most familiarly conversant with the Impostor all the time that scene of delusion was acting by him, and a person of extraordinary memory; he was most confided in for the giving of an exact account of all his sayings and doings relating to his religion; and there are reckoned no fewer than

^m Disputatio Christiani, c. 6. Elmacin. lib. 1. c. 4. Abul Pharaghius, Abul Feda, &c.

ⁿ 'For she died the 58th year of the Hegira,' Elmacin. lib. 1. c. 7.

^o Joannes Andreas, c. 3.

^p Gentius in Notis ad Mussadinum Sadum, p. 578.

5340 traditions among them, which are built upon his authority only. This Abdorrahman is also called *Abu Hareira*, that is, the *father of a cat*, which name Mahomet gave him for the fondness he had for a cat, which he was used most an end to carry with him in his bosom, wherever he went. For it is usual in the Arabic tongue, when a man is remarkable for any one particular thing, thus to express it, by calling him the father of it. ^a And so Chalid, who was Mahomet's host when he first came to Medina, was for his remarkable patience called *Abu Job*, that is, the *father of Job*, or of the *patience of Job*. And this is that Job, ^r who dying at the siege of Constantinople, when besieged by the Saracens, was there buried under the walls of the city, and hath his tomb there to be seen even to this day, ^s where all the Grand Signiors go forth to be inaugurated, when they first take upon them the regal authority.

Haphsa, the daughter of Omar, was next to ^t Ayesha, most in favour with him, and her he intrusted with the keeping of the chest of his apostleship, wherein were laid up all the original papers of his pretended revelations, out of which the Alcoran was composed, as hath been already said; and the original copy of that book, ^u Abu Beker, after the finishing of it, delivered also unto her, to be kept in the same chest; which proves the mistake of Joannes Andreas ^x in assigning the keeping of this chest to Ayesha. For it is not likely that Abu Beker would have dispossessed his own daughter of this office, which was so honourable among them, had she been

^a Bochartus in Hierozoico, part 1. c. 1.

^r Elmacin. lib. 1. c. 7.

^s Ricaut's History of the Present State of the Ottoman Empire, Book 1. chap. 2. Smith's Brief Description of Constantinople.

^t Joannes Andreas, c. 7.

^u Abul Feda, Hottingeri Bibliotheca Orientalis, c. 2. Pococ. Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 362.

^x De Confusione Sectæ Mahometanz, c. 2.

first entrusted with it by the Impostor. Haphsa was much the elder woman, and for that reason probably preferred to this trust. For when she died, which was towards the latter end of the reign of Othman, she was sixty years ^y old, and therefore must have been at the death of the Impostor, at least forty years old, when Ayesha was not full twenty.

Zewda was in least favour with him of any of his wives, ^z and he intended to have put her away; but she earnestly desired him that she might still have the reputation and honour of being his wife, promising him, if he would grant her this, she would be content no more to lie with him, but to give her turn always to Ayesha; which condition he willingly accepted of, out of that great love which he had for Ayesha, and so permitted her to continue in his house as long as he lived.

Zainab was first the wife of Zeyd, his enfranchised slave, who being a woman of great beauty, ^a the old lecher fell desperately in love with her. But for fear of the scandal which his taking her might give, he did all he could to suppress his flame, till at length, being able to resist no longer, he did break the matter to her, and caused Zeyd to put her away, that he might take her to wife. Which he being forced to submit to, this gave great offence to all his followers, that he, who called himself a prophet, and an apostle of God, sent to teach men his law, should for the gratifying of his lust, do so scandalous a thing. But to salve the matter, out comes the thirty-

^y Gentius in Notis ad Mufladinum Sadum, p. 568.

^z Gentius in Notis ad Mufladinum Sadum, p. 568.

^a Al Jannabi, Abul Feda, Al Kodai, Pocockii Specim. Hist. Arab, p. 182. Richardi Confutatio, c. 8. Disputatio Christiani, c. 6. Ecchelenfis Hist. Arab. part 1. c. 5. Confutatio Mahometis, Edita per Le Moyne. Joannes Andreas, c. 6. Guadagnol, Tract. 2. c. 5. § 3. & c. 10. § 1. Zamachshari, Bidawi & alii Commentatores, ad cap. 33. Alcorani, Liber Almawakeph. Fortalit. Fid. lib. 4. Confid. 2.

third chapter of the Alcoran, called the *Chapter of Hergfes*, where God is brought in declaring, that he had married Zainab to Mahomet, and given him free liberty to enjoy her according to his desire; and also rebuking him, that knowing God had given him this thing, he should abstain so long from her, out of the regard he had to the people, as if he feared them more than God. However, this could not clear him so, but that many of his followers are hard put to it, to excuse him from the scandal of this fact, even unto this day; and there are some of them who make no doubt to charge him with sin on the account hereof. Zainab hereon becoming the wife of Mahomet, lived with him to the time of his death, always glorying and vaunting herself above his other wives, that^b whereas they were married to Mahomet by their parents and kinsfolk, she was married to him by God himself, who dwells above the seven heavens.

How he married Jeweira, hath been already related. * Saphia was a Jewish woman, and descended of the race of the priests, on which account she was used to brag, that she had Aaron for her father, Moses for her uncle, and Mahomet for her husband. Of the rest of his wives I find not any thing said.

Besides these, he had a concubine whom he much loved. She was^d an Egyptian woman, and a Christian of the Jacobite sect. The governor of Egypt having occasion to treat with him about some matters, and being informed of his brutish passion, to gratify him herein, and thereby the better incline him to his purpose, sent him this maid for a present, she being

^b Ecchelenfis Hist. Arab. part 1. c. 5.

* Disputatio Christiani, c. 6.

^d Abul Pharaghius, p. 103. Joannes Andreas, c. 8. Bello-nius, l. 3. c. 8. Richardi Confutatio, c. 12. Cantacuzeni, Orat. 2. § 8. Guadagnol, Tract. 2. c. 10. § 2. Commentatores in c. 66. Alcorani, Fortalitium Fidei, lib. 4. Confid. 2.

then only fifteen years old : he immediately fell in love with her. But how secret soever he managed the amours for fear of his wives, Ayeshah and Haphsa found it out, and caught them together in the fact. Whereon they reproached him bitterly for it, that he, who called himself a prophet sent from God to teach men righteousness, should do such a thing ; at which being much confounded, he swore a solemn oath, that in case they would conceal the matter, and not say any thing of it to raise a scandal against him among his Musslemans, he would never have to do with her more. On which oath they were content to pass the matter over, and say nothing of it. But Mahomet's lust being of greater force with him than his oath, he could not long hold, but was caught again with her by his jealous wives. Whereon they flew out into a desperate rage against him, and after having loaded him with a multitude of reproaches, both for his perjury as well as adultery, went from him to their fathers houses ; which raising a great noise, and many being offended with him for it, to smooth the matter again, he had recourse to his old art, and out comes a new revelation to justify him in it, the sixty-sixth chapter of the Alcoran, called the *Chapter of Prohibition*, wherein he brings in God allowing Mahomet, and all his Musslemans, to lie with their maids when they will, notwithstanding their wives. The first words of that chapter are, ' O prophet, why dost thou forbid what God hath allowed thee, that thou mayest please thy wives ? God hath granted unto you to lie with your maid-servants.' Which law being published, it gave such content to his licentious followers, that no more words were made of this matter ; but all gladly laid hold of the liberty which he had granted ; and ever since it hath been an established law among all that sect, beside their wives ' to keep as

* Ricaut's History of the Present State of the Ottoman Empire,

many women-slaves for their lust, as they shall think fit to buy; and the children of the one are as legitimate as the children of the other. And the Grand Signior, who never marries, hath all his women under this latter notion, that is, as his slaves, and he keeps none but such in his seraglio; only after they have born him a son, he sometimes gives them the name of Sultana, which is Queen. Ayeshah and Haphsa, finding the matter to go thus, and that Mahomet had in the same chapter threatened them with divorce, unless they submitted and were obedient; they sent their fathers to him to make their peace, and again returned to his house, and totally submitted, for the future, to his will in all things; and from that time he lay with his maid Mary as often as he pleased, without their any further contradiction or control, and had a son by her, who was called Abraham. But after the death of the Impostor, no account was had of her or her son, but both were sent away into Egypt, and no mention made of either ever after among them. I suppose Ayeshah, out of the hatred which she bore her, procured of her father, who succeeded the Impostor in the government, to have her thus disposed of.

One of the main arguments ^f which the followers of Mahomet make use of to excuse his having so many wives, is, that he might beget young prophets; but notwithstanding this, he left no young prophet nor prophetess neither behind him of all his wives. Of ^g six children, which he had all by Cadigha his first wife, and none by any of the others, they all died before him, excepting only Fatima the wife of Ali, and she survived him only sixty days.

As the gratifying of his ambition and his lust, was the main

Book 2. chap. 21. Thevenot, part 1. lib. 1. c. 14. Bellonius, lib. 3. c. 8. & c. 10. Clenardi Epistolæ, p. 29, 30, 50, & 66.

^f Ahmed Ebn Zin.

^g Abul Pharaghius, p. 103.

end of his imposture, so they both continually appear through the whole contexture of it. At first his ambition had the predominancy in him; but when that began to be somewhat satisfied by the power he had attained to, his lust grew upon him with his age, and at length he seemed totally dissolved into it. And there are strange things said of him this way; ^a as that he had in venery the strength of forty other men, and that he knew all his wives, when he had eleven of them, one after another in an ⁱ hour's time. Whatever laws he gave to restrain the lust of other men, he took care always to except himself, resolving, it seems, to take his full swing herein without let or control, according as the violent bent of his brutish appetite this way should lead him. For,

1. He ^k would not allow any other to have above four wives, but to himself ⁱ he reserved a liberty to marry without restraint, as many as he should think fit, and he had ten together at the same time when he died.

2. He obliged all others, who have two, three, or four wives, to use them all equally alike, both as to their cloathing, diet, and the duties of the marriage-bed. And in case any wife thinks herself unequally used in any of those particulars, and that the husband doth not as largely dispense to her of them, as to his other wives, it is allowed through all Mahometan countries, that she make her complaint to the judge, and the law will give her redress herein, and force the husband to do her justice. But Mahomet reserved liberty to himself to do as he should see fit as to this; and therefore when some of his

^a Fortalit. Fid. lib. 4. Confid. 2. Guadagnol, Tract. 2. c. 7. § 1. Richardi Confutatio, c. 8. Disputatio Christiani, c. 6.

ⁱ Joannes Andreas, e libro Asmali, c. 7. Guadagnol ex eodem libro, Tract. 2. c. 7. § 1.

^k Alcoran, c. 4.

ⁱ Alcoran, c. 33. Joannes Andreas, c. 7. Guadagnol, Tract. 2. c. 10. § 3. Alcoran, c. 4.

wives were aggrieved, because he shewed more favour to the other, and particularly to Ayesha, than to them, and made complaints against him on this account ; to still their clamours, he brings in God in the thirty-third chapter of his Alcoran, giving him full liberty to deal with his wives as he should think fit, to go in to which he pleased, and abstain from which he pleased ; and commanding them to be content herewith, and also to be well pleased with whatever else he should do in reference to them, accepting as a favour from him whatsoever he should give them, and take exceptions at nothing which he should be pleased to order concerning them.

3. In the fourth chapter of his Alcoran, which is called the *Chapter of women*, he forbids his Muslemans to marry with their mothers, their mothers-in-law, the wives of their fathers, their daughters, the sisters of their fathers, the sister of their mothers, the daughters of their brothers, the daughters of their sisters, their nurses, their foster-sisters, the mothers of their wives, the sisters of their wives, the daughters of their wives by other husbands, the daughters of women whom they have known, and the wives of their sons, and the married wives of other men. And yet in the thirty-third chapter he brings in God exempting him from this law, and giving him an especial privilege to take to wife the daughters of his brother, or the daughters of his sister, and to go in to any other woman whatsoever of the believers, that shall be willing to prostitute herself unto him. But he there takes care to appropriate this liberty so peculiarly to himself alone, that he excludes all others whatsoever from it. For it seems the old lecher feared his lust should not be sufficiently provided for, if any thing less than the whole sex were allowed him for the gratifying of it; and therefore would endure no restraint or limitation upon himself herein, how strictly soever he lays it upon others. In the above mentioned law he forbids the marrying of the wives

of other men ; and abundant reason there is for it, that no man shall be allowed adulterously to take to wife her that is at the same time the wife of another ; and yet he transgressed it in marrying the wife of his servant Zeyd. But to allay the scandal and offence which was taken at it, and to secure others from fearing the like injury and violence from him, he was content after that to lay a restraint upon himself to do so no more ; and therefore brings in God, telling him in the same thirty-third chapter of his Alcoran, that it shall not be lawful for him for the future to take another man's wife, how much soever he may be taken with her beauty.

As he was thus brutishly enslaved to the love of women, so was he as excessively jealous of those whom he had taken to wife. And therefore to deter them from what he feared ^m he threatens them with double the punishment of other wives, both here and hereafter, in case they should be false unto him. And when some of his followers made too frequent resort to his house, and there entered into discourse with some of his wives, this gave him that offence, that to prevent it for the future, out come, as from God, those verses of the Alcoran ⁿ wherein he tells them, that they should not enter into the house of the prophet without permission ; and that if invited to dine with him, they should depart as soon as dinner was over, and not enter into discourse with his wives ; that although the prophet be ashamed to bid them be gone, yet God is not ashamed to tell them the truth. And in the same chapter he forbids his wives to speak to any man, unless with their faces veiled. And this his jealousy proceeded so far, as to go beyond the grave. For he could not bear that any one else should have to do with his wives, though after his death ; and therefore ^o strictly forbids all his followers ever to go in to any

^m Alcoran, c. 33.

ⁿ Alcoran, *ibid.*

^o Alcoran, *ibid.*

of them as long as they should live. So that although all other women when repudiated, or become widows, had liberty to marry again, all his wives were excluded from it. And therefore all those whom he left at his death ^p lived widows ever after, although some of them were very young; as particularly Ayesha, who was not then full twenty years old, and lived above eight and forty years after, which was in that hot country looked upon as a very hard restraint put upon them.

In all these instances I have mentioned, it appears how much he made his imposture serve his lust. And indeed, almost the whole of his Alcoran was ^q in like manner framed to answer some purpose or other of his, according as occasion required. If any new thing were to be put on foot, any objection against him or his religion to be answered, any difficulty to be solved, any discontent among his people to be quieted, any offence to be removed, or any thing else done for the interest of his designs, his constant recourse was to the angel Gabriel for a new revelation; and out came some addition to his Alcoran to serve his turn herein. So that the most of it was made on such like occasions, to influence his party to what he intended. And all his commentators thus far acknowledge it, that they are on every chapter very particular in assigning for what causes and for whose sakes it was sent down from heaven unto them. But hereby it came to pass that abundance of contradictions got into this book. For as the interest and the design of the Impostor varied, so was he forced to make his pretended revelations to vary also; which is a thing so well known to those of his sect, that they all acknowledge it; and therefore where the contradictions are

^p Joannes Andreas, c. 7.
^q Richardi Confutatio, c. 12.

such, as they cannot folve them, there they will have one of the contradicting places to be revoked. And they reckon in the whole Alcoran, ^r above an hundred and fifty verses which are thus revoked; which is the best shift they can make to folve the contradictions and inconsistencies of it. But thereby they do exceedingly betray the unsteadiness and inconstancy of him that was the author of it.

In the beginning of his imposture, he seemed more inclined to the Jews than to the Christians; and in the first forming of his new-invented religion, followed the pattern of theirs more than any other. But after his coming to Medina, he took that disgust against them, that he became their bitter and most irreconcilable enemy ever after, and used them with greater cruelty in his wars, than any other he had to deal with.

But to the Christians he ever carried himself with as much favour as could be expected from such a barbarian; and wherever they fell under his power, they had always good terms from him. His general rule, and which he laid as a strict obligation upon all his followers, was to fight for the propagation of his religion. And ^s there were only two conditions on which he granted peace to any he had to do with; and these were either to come into his religion, or submit to be tributaries unto him. They that did the former, were admitted into the same privileges and freedoms with the rest of his followers: but the latter had only the benefit of his protection, as to their goods and persons, and free exercise of their religion, without any other privilege or advantage whatsoever,

^r Joannes Andreas, c. 2. Guadagnol, Tract. 2. c. 7. § 3.

^s Alcoran, c. 4. c. 9, &c. Disputatio Christiani, c. 8. Richardi Confutatio, c. 1, 6, 7, & 10. Cantacuzeni, Orat. 1.

for which every man paid an annual tribute. But those who would not come in, and make peace with him on one of these two conditions, were by his law to be put to the sword. And this law, in every one of its particulars, is still observed in all Mahometan countries, even to this day. At first few submitted to him, but such as he forced by conquest; but when his power grew to be formidable, then multitudes, both of Christians and other religions, flocked to him for his protection, and became his tributaries. And there hath in this last age been published, first by Sionita at Paris, and after by Fabricius at Rostoch, a writing in Arabic, which bears the title of an Ancient Capitulation of the Christians of the East with this Impostor, which is said to have been laid up in the monastery of Mount Carmel in Palestine, and from thence brought into France, and repositied in the French king's library. But Grotius rejects it as a forgery; and good reason he had so to do. For it bears date in the fourth year of the Hegira, when Mahomet was not yet in a condition to speak in that language which he is made to do in that writing; nor was his power then so formidable, as to move any to pray his protection, he having not long before been overthrown and beaten at the battle of Ohud; and at the time this Instrument bears date (which was the fourth month of that year) not fully recovered from that blow; but in the lowest circumstances he had at any time been since the taking the sword for the propagating of his imposture; and there is another particular in it, which manifestly discovers the forgery: it makes Moawias, the son of Abu Sophian, to be the secretary to the Impostor, who drew the Instrument; whereas it is certain, that Moawias, with his father Abu Sophian, was then in arms against him;

^c In Epist. ad Gallos.

and it was not till the taking of Mecca, which was four years after, that they came in unto him, and to save their lives embraced the imposture. This Instrument is to be read in English, in the History of the Present State of the Ottoman Empire, Book 2. chap. ii.

However, this is certain, that the Christians had better terms from him, than any other of his tributaries, and they enjoy them even to this day; there being no Mahometan country where their religion is not esteemed the best next their own, and the professors of it accordingly respected by them before the Jews, Heathens, or any other sort of men that differ from them.

As the Impostor allowed the Old and New Testament, so would he fain prove his mission from both. The texts, which are made use of for this purpose by those who defend his cause, are these following :

Deuteronomy, c. 33. v. 2. It is said, ‘ The Lord came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; he shined forth from mount Pharan, and he came with ten thousand of saints; from his right hand went a fiery law for them.’ By which words they will have ^u meant the coming down of the law to Moses on mount Sinai; of the gospel to Jesus at Jerusalem, and of the Alcoran to Mahomet at Mecca. For, say they, Seir are the mountains of Jerusalem where Jesus appeared, and Pharan the mountains of Mecca where Mahomet appeared. But they are here much out in their geography; for Pharan ^x is a city of Arabia Petræa, near the Red Sea, towards the bottom of that Gulf not far from the confines of Egypt and Palestine, above five hundred miles distant from Mecca. It was formerly ^y an Episcopal See under the patriarch of Jeru-

^u Shareftani Safiodinus, Pocockii Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 185.

^x Ptolemy.

^y Geographia Sacra Caroli a Sancto Paulo, p. 317.

falem, and famous for Theodorus ^z once bishop of it, who was the first that in his writings published to the world the opinion of the Monothelites. It is at this day called ^a Fara. From hence the desarts lying from this city to the borders of Palestine, are called the desarts or wilderneys of Pharan; and the mountains lying in it, the mountains of Pharan, in holy Scripture, near which Moses first began to repeat, and more clearly explain the law to the children of Israel before his death; and to that refers the text above mentioned.

Psal. 50. v. 2. We have it, ‘Out of Sion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined.’ Which the Syriac version reads thus, ‘Out of Sion God hath shewed a glorious crown.’ From whence some Arabic translations having expressed the two last words by *Eclilan Mahmudan*, i. e. an honourable crown; by *Mahmudan*, they understand the name of Mahomet, and so read the verse thus, ‘Out of Sion hath God shewed the crown of Mahomet.’

Isaiah, c. 21. v. 7. We read, ‘and he saw a chariot with a couple of horsemen, a chariot of asses, and a chariot of camels.’ But the old Latin version hath it, *Et vidit currum duorum Equitum, Ascensorem Asini, & Ascensorem Cameli*: i. e. And he saw a chariot of two horsemen, a rider upon an ass, and a rider upon a camel. Where by the rider upon an ass, they understand Jesus Christ, because he did so ride to Jerusalem; and by the rider on the camel, Mahomet, because he was of the Arabians, who used to ride upon camels.

John 16. v. 7. Our Saviour tells his disciples, ‘If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.’ By the Comforter, the Ma-

^z Acta Concilii Laterani sub Martino Papa.

^a Carolus a Sancto Paulo ubi supra. Geographia Nubiensis, Clim. 3. Part 5.

hometans will have their prophet Mahomet to be here meant ; and therefore among other titles which they give him in their language, one is *Paraclet* ^b which is the Greek word here used in this text for the Comforter, made Arabic. They also say, that the very name of Mahomet, both here and in other places of the gospel, was expressly mentioned, but that the Christians out of malice have blotted it out, and corrupted those holy writings ; and that at Paris there is a ^c copy of these gospels without these corruptions, in which the coming of Mahomet is foretold in several places, with his name expressly mentioned in them. And some such thing they had need to say, to justify the impudent lie of this Impostor, who in the sixty-first chapter of his Alcoran, entitled, *The Chapter of Battle*, hath these words, ‘ remember that Jesus the son of Mary said to ‘ the children of Israel, I am the messenger of God, he hath ‘ sent me to confirm the Old Testament, and to declare unto ‘ you, that there shall come a prophet after me, whose name ‘ shall be Mahomet.’

There needs no answer to confute these glosses. The absurdity of them is sufficiently exposed, by barely relating them. And since they could find nothing else in all the books of the Old and New Testament to wrest to their purpose, but these texts above mentioned, which are to every man’s apprehending so exceedingly wide of it ; these shew at how vast a distance the true word of God is from this impious imposture, and how much it is in all its parts contrary thereto.

And thus far I have laid together as exactly and particularly as I could, out of the best authors that treat of this Impostor, all that is credibly related of him, and those methods which

^b Al Jannabi, Pocockii Specim. Hist. Arab. p. 185.

^c Pocockii Specim. Hist. Arab. p. 186.

he took for the framing and propagating that impious forgery, which he hath imposed upon ſo large a part of mankind as have been deluded thereinto. And what is my deſign in the preſent publiſhing hereof, is ſhewn in the enſuing treatiſe.

A
DISCOURSE
FOR
THE VINDICATING OF
CHRISTIANITY
FROM THE
CHARGE OF IMPOSTURE.
•
• OFFERED,
BY WAY OF LETTER,
TO THE CONSIDERATION OF THE DEISTS
OF THE PRESENT AGE.

LETTER

TO THE

DEISTS, &c.

GENTLEMEN,

IF I am not mistaken, the reason you give for your renouncing that religion ye were baptized into, and is the religion of the country in which ye were born, is, ‘ that the Gospel of ‘ Jesus Christ is an imposture :’ an assertion that I tremble to repeat. But whether that Gospel be right, or ye are in the right that deny it, will appear from the consideration of the nature of an imposture, and from the life of that most infamous impostor (whom we, as well as you, acknowledge to be such) which I have before given you the exact picture of. And if you can find any one lineament of it, any one line of all its filthy features in the whole gospel of Jesus Christ, I durst say, (so sure I am of the contrary) that for the sake hereof I will give you all you contend for, and yield you up the whole cause. And therefore that we may thoroughly examine the matter, I will lay down, in the first place, What an imposture is ; *2dly*, What are inseparable marks and characters of it ; and *3dly*, That none of these marks can belong to the gospel of Jesus Christ. And when I have done this, I hope I shall convince all such of you, who have not totally abandoned yourselves to

your infidelity, that the gospel of Jesus Christ is that sacred truth of God, which you are all bound to believe.

An imposture, taking the word in the full latitude of its signification, may denote any lie or cheat, whereby one man imposes upon another. But it is most frequently used to express such cheats as are imposed on us by those who come with false characters of themselves, pretending to be what they are not, in order to delude and deceive. And when this character, which is thus falsely assumed, is no less than a pretended embassy from heaven, and under the credit of it a new religion is delivered to the world as coming from God, which is nothing else but a forgery, invented by the first propagators of it, to impose a cheat upon mankind, it amounts to be an imposture in that sense, in which you would have the gospel of Jesus Christ to be such. And in this sense it is to be understood in the controversy between us; so that the whole question which we are to examine into is, whether the Christian Religion be a truth really given unto us by divine revelation from God our Creator, or else a mere human invention, contrived by the first propagators of it, to impose a cheat upon mankind. And when I have fully disproved the latter part of this question, that the Christian Religion cannot be such an invention contrived to cheat and impose upon us, that will sufficiently prove the former, that it must be that divine truth, which all we that are Christians firmly believe it to be.

That it is possible such a cheat may be imposed upon men, cannot be denied. It is sufficiently proved in the foregoing history, which is a very full instance of it; and I have laid it before you for this very purpose, that you may therein see clearly delineated and displayed in all its proper colours, the whole nature of the thing, which you charge our holy religion with. All that I contend for, is, that if Christianity be such an imposture as we all acknowledge the religion of Mahomet

to be, it must be just such another thing as that is, with all the same marks, characters and properties of an imposture belonging thereto; and that if none of those marks, characters, or properties can be discovered in it, it must be a clear eviſion of the whole charge, and manifestly prove, that our holy religion cannot be that thing which you would have it be. For our only way of knowing things, is by their marks and properties; and it is by them only that we can discover what the nature of them is. It is only by the marks and properties of a man, that we know a man from another living creature, for we cannot see the essences of things. And so it must be only by the marks and properties of an imposture, that we can know an imposture from that which is a real truth, when attested unto us. And as where we find none of the marks and properties of a man, we assuredly know that cannot be a man, how much soever any one may tell us that it is: so where we find none of the marks and properties of an imposture, we may assuredly know that cannot be an imposture, how much soever you, or any other like you, may assert it so to be.

Now the marks and characters which I look on to be inseparable from every such imposture, are these following:

1. That it must always have for its end some carnal interest.
2. That it can have none but wicked men for the authors of it.
3. That both these must necessarily appear in the very texture of the imposture itself.
4. That it can never be so framed, but that it must contain some palpable falsities, which will discover the falsity of all the rest.
5. That wherever it is first propagated, it must be done by craft and fraud.
6. That when entrusted with many conspirators, it can never be long concealed.
- And, 7. That it can never be established, unless backed with force and violence.

That all these must belong to every imposture, and all particularly did so to Mahometism; and that none of them can be charged upon Christianity, is

what I shall now proceed to shew you : Of each of them in their order.

SECT. I.

I. That every imposture must have for its end some carnal interest, is a thing so plain and evident, that I suppose it will not need much proof. For to impose a cheat upon mankind, and in a matter of that great importance, as all that have any religion, hold that to be, is a thing of that difficulty to compass, and of that danger to attempt, that it cannot be conceived, why any one should put himself upon such a design, that doth not propose some very valuable advantage to himself in the success. To cheat one man is not always so easy a matter, nor is it without its mischiefs and inconveniencies in the discovery. But to enterprize a cheat upon all mankind, and in a thing of that importance, as the introducing of a new religion, and the abolishing of the old one, (to which so many both by custom and education will be always zealously affected, be it what it will) must be an undertaking of the greatest difficulty and hazard imaginable. For whoever engageth himself in such a plot of imposture, must unavoidably meet with many strong oppositions to struggle with in the management of it, which will continually put his thoughts upon the rack, to find out devices to surmount them, and his body to incessant pains and labour to bring them into execution ; and for the effecting hereof, he must have some confidants to assist him, some to help forward the design, whom he must trust with the secret of it, and the more he hath of such, the more he hazards all to a discovery. And all this while his mind will be filled with anxious cares, and his thoughts distracted with many uneasy and affrighting apprehensions (as is usual with men on wicked designs) about the success, and every failure will expose him to that terrible revenge from

those he attempts to delude, as such a villany, whenever detected, most justly deserves. This was Mahomet's case all the while he was propagating his imposture at Mecca, and so it must be of every other such Impostor also. And when a man puts himself upon all this, the nature of the thing manifestly leads us to conclude, he must propose something to himself hereby, which may make him amends for all in the result. For when so much is put to hazard, men do not use to do it for nothing. There must always be some great interest in the bottom of such a design, something that the undertaker values at a more than ordinary rate, to make him engage in so exceeding difficult and dangerous an enterprise. For wherever the venture is great, it must be taken for granted there is an end proposed, which in the estimation of the venturer, is equivalent thereto. What it was that put Mahomet on his imposture, the foregoing history of his life sufficiently shews; it was his ambition and his lust. To have the sovereignty over his country, to gratify his ambition; and as many women as he pleased to satiate his lust, was what he aimed at; and to gain himself a party for the compassing of this, was the grand design of that new religion which he invented, and the whole end and reason of his imposing it on those he deluded thereinto. And whoever pursues the like method, must certainly have some such end in it; it being totally incredible that any one should take upon him the trouble, fatigue, and danger of carrying on such a cheat only for cheating sake. But here we challenge all the enemies of that holy religion which we profess, to find out any thing like this in the gospel of Jesus Christ, any thing that favours of worldly interest, either in him the first founder of our Faith, or in any of his holy apostles, who were the first propagators of it. Vaninus, one of the most zealous champions of impiety that ever appeared against the Christian cause (for he died a martyr for

it) hath attempted this : but after the most accurate and diligent search which so keen an adversary could make, he was forced to give up the point ; and plainly acknowledge, that in the whole series of the history and actions of our Saviour, he could not find any thing that he could charge with secular interest or design to blast him or his religion with. And if you will renew the same attempt, though you extend the inquiry much farther, even to his apostles, and all the rest of his disciples, who first preached this holy religion to the world, and take in to your assistance all the enemies of it ; after the strictest scrutiny that you can make, you will never have any better success herein.

For had our Saviour's design been to seduce the people for his own interest, he must have taken the same course that other seducers do. He must have flattered them in their humours, and formed his doctrines to their fancies ; courted those that were in greatest authority and esteem with them, and made it his business mostly to preach against and decry those who were least in their favour, and studied and practised all other such arts of popularity, whereby he might best insinuate into their good liking, and gain that interest with them, as might be sufficient to serve his purpose, and obtain the end proposed. These were the methods whereby Mahomet first propagated his imposture, and these are they which all others must take, whose purpose it is to deceive the people. But our Saviour in every particular acted contrary hereto ; which sufficiently proves that he had no such design to compass. For he freely preached against whatever he found blameable in the people, spared not their beloved errors, or framed his doctrines to indulge them in any one evil practice, how predominant soever amongst them, and was so far from courting those in the greatest authority and esteem with them, that he was most sharp and bitter against them above all others, whom they most

idolized, I mean the Scribes and Pharisees : For he, on all occasions, detected their hypocrisies, and laid open their evil practices, and in the severest manner rebuked and condemned them for their iniquity therein, even to the preferring and justifying before them the wicked Publicans, who for their exactions and oppressions upon the people in their gathering the public taxes, were held among them the most hated of men, and the worst of sinners. And therefore, though his miracles often drew their admiration and their applause on the one hand, his doctrines and his preachings as fast alienated them from him on the other ; so that those very same men, who, for the sake of the former, followed him often in multitudes, and were ready to acknowledge him to be the Messiah, were as violently set against him at other times, for the sake of the latter, and at last crucified him on the account thereof. And is it possible to conceive that he who took all those courses so contrary to the humour of the people, without regarding how much they tended to exasperate them against him, should have any interest or design of his own to serve himself of them ?

When our Saviour took upon him to be the Messiah that was promised, had he done it only as an Impostor, to promote a secular interest and design of his own, he would certainly have assumed that character according to those notions in which the Jews expected him. For in this case the expectation of the people must have been the grand motive to the imposture, and their looking for such a Messiah to come, the main inducing reason of his putting himself thereon ; and therefore to be sure, had he been an Impostor, he would have offered himself to them no otherwise than just such a Messiah as their notions of him would have him to be ; and there are two special reasons which in this case would have determined him hereto. 1. Because those notions offered to him the

highest secular interest that could be attained unto : and, 2. Because the suiting of his pretensions exactly according to them, would have been the readiest and most likely way for him to carry the interest, whatever it was, which you may suppose him to have aimed at. .

And, first, the notions which the Jews had of the Messias, offered him the highest secular interest that could be attained unto ; and therefore to be sure, when he took upon him to be that Messias, had he done it only as an Impostor, for a secular interest, he would have laid hold of that interest offered, and under the character which he assumed, most certainly have claimed all that which according to those notions the Messias was to have. For this was nothing less than a most glorious secular kingdom ; the expectations of the Jews being then concerning this matter the same, as they have ever since continued amongst them ; that the Messias ^a was to be a secular prince, who was to deliver them from their enemies, and restore the kingdom of David at Jerusalem, and there reign in great glory and splendor over the whole house of Israel. And what greater or more desirable interest can this world afford, than such a state of advancement ? And what is there that is more valued and esteemed in the opinion of all mankind, than the attainment thereof ? And at that time when our Saviour first appeared on his mission, there was the most favourable juncture that could offer itself, for his setting up for all this : for then the people of the Jews being fallen under the yoke of the Ro-

^a ‘ The Messias shall come and restore the kingdom of the house of David to the ancient state of its former dominion, and shall rebuild the temple, and gather together the dispersed of Israel ; and then shall be re-established the legal rites and constitutions, as in former times ; and sacrifices shall be offered, and the Sabbatical years and Jubilees observed, according to every precept delivered in the law.’ Maimonides in *Yad Hachazekah* in *Traët. de Regibus & Bellis eorum*, c. 11. § 1.

man government, and also grown very impatient under it, entertained a general expectation of the speedy coming of the Messias, under that character of a temporal prince, which they had conceited of him, to deliver them from this bondage, and by conquering those who subjected them thereto, again restore the kingdom of Israel. And these hopes had then taken possession of their minds, and they were all so full of them, that every one stood in a manner ready and prepared to join with him, whosoever should take upon him to be the person, as sufficiently appeareth not only from ^b the Scriptures, but also from the history which ^c Josephus wrote of those times. And

^b Mark 15. v. 43. Luke 2. v. 38, &c. 24. v. 31. Acts 1. v. 6. From all which places compared together, it appears that there was among the Jews, in the time of our Saviour, a general expectation of the speedy coming of the Messias, and that their notion was of a temporal deliverance and a temporal restoration of the kingdom of Israel to be effected by him. And this expectation was it which made the multitude so ready to join themselves to Theudas, and after to Judas of Galilee, of whom mention is made Acts 5. v. 36, 37. and after that to an Egyptian Jew, Acts 21. v. 38. on their pretending to be the persons from whom this deliverance was expected.

^c Josephus not only makes mention of Theudas, and Judas of Galilee, and the Egyptian, of whom we have an account in Scripture, Antiq. lib. 20. c. 2, & 6. but also of several others, who on the same pretences found the multitude ready to join themselves unto them, Antiq. lib. 20. c. 6, & 7. & de Bello Judaico, l. 7. c. 31. As did also Barcofbas in the reign of Adrian the Roman emperor. And what Maimonides delivers of the doctrine of the Jews concerning this matter, might give any man an handle to offer at it. For, saith he, the Messias is not to be known by signs or wonders (for he is to work none) but only by conquest. And therefore his words are; ‘ If there ariseth a king of the house of David who is studious of the law, and diligent in observing the precepts of it, as was David his father; that is, not only of the law, which is written, but of the oral also, and inclineth all Israel to walk therein, and repairs the breaches, and fights the battles of the Lord, this person may be presumed to be the Messias. But if he prospers in what he undertakes, and subdues all the neighbouring nations round about him, and rebuilds the sanc-

therefore had our Saviour, by taking upon him to be the Messiah, aimed only, as an Impostor, at a secular interest, what reason can be given, why he should not with the name of the Messiah, have also claimed this grand interest of a kingdom, which, according to the opinion of all those who expected a Messiah, belonged thereto? Or why he should not in so favourable a juncture, as was then offered for it, have possessed himself thereof? But he was so far from doing either of these, that he waved both, and not only omitted this opportunity of possessing himself of this kingdom, but also renounced and disclaimed the whole thereof. For instead of laying any pretence to it, he set himself to confute those very notions which gave it unto him, and to convince the people that they were mistaken in them, and thereby overthrew all that which offered unto him the highest secular interest which the men of this world use to aim at. And not only so, but advanced in the stead of those errors, such doctrines concerning the Messiah as were not only without all manner of worldly interest in them, but all levelled directly opposite thereto. For he taught them, that the kingdom of the Messiah was not a temporal, but a spiritual kingdom; that he was not to be a judge and a ruler over them in the secular affairs of this world, and the pomp and glory thereof, but to govern and direct their hearts within by the power of his holy spirit, in order to conform them to that law of righteousness, which might fit them to reign with him in the kingdom of everlasting glory hereafter. And therefore when the Jews, being convinced by his wonderful works that he was the Messiah, would have taken him by force and made him their king, he withdrew from among them to

‘ tuary in its former place, and gathers together the dispersed of
 ‘ Israel, then he is for certain the Messiah.’ Maimonides in *Yad
 Hachazekah Tract. de Regibus & Bellis eorum*, c. 11. § 4.

disappoint the design. And when interrogated by Pilate, he told him his kingdom was not of this world. And had he aimed at any such thing, he would never have taught such doctrines of himself, which so directly overthrew all that which gave him the most favourable advantage of attaining thereto. Had he offered at more of this world's interest, than the notions of the Jews invested him with (if it were possible more could be had than those gave their Messias) or if he had joined thereto the enjoyment of carnal pleasure, as Mahomet did, there might then have been some ground of charging him of differing from those notions for the serving of his own interest; but when the change was on the quite contrary hand, and instead of being that reigning and glorious Messias, amidst the highest pomp and splendor of this world, as the Jews would have had him to be, he declared himself only for such a kingdom as had nothing of this world in it, and whose greatest perfection lay in its greatest opposition thereto; he that will say that there was any thing of this world in his thus stripping himself of all the pomp and glory of it, or that there could be any design of interest for himself, where all manner of self-interest is thus renounced, must reconcile contradictions, and make the nature of one extreme to consist in the other, which is most directly opposite thereto. Had he, when he took upon him to be the Messias, done it only for a worldly interest, this great interest of reigning so obviously offered itself unto him under that character, that it cannot be conceived how he should ever have avoided it. The power, and glory, and riches of a kingdom, are too great baits of allurements to the worldly-minded man, ever to be refused by such a one, after he had assumed that character, which, in the generally received notion of it, invested him with them. Or can it be imagined, since these are the only things which could make that character at all desirable to an Impostor, why any man should run the great

hazard and trouble of being such in the assuming of it, but for the sake of them? All those false Christs, who have been real Impostors, and have in several ages started up to delude the world with this pretence, have ever with the name of the Messiah, claimed also this kingdom, which the Jews ascribed thereto, and that, in every such scene of deceit which hath opened in the world, hath always appeared to have been the bait, which allured those wretches to act that part therein. And had our Saviour been such a one as they, he must certainly have taken the same course. For to do otherwise, would have been to do the wickedness without the temptation, and to run the hazard without that which was to reward the success. But he having been so far herefrom, that he did not only renounce this kingdom, but all manner of other worldly interest whatever; this plainly shews he could have no design upon this world by that mission which he undertook, or had any other reason for his entering on it as the Messiah, but that he was really that person, whom God, by his holy prophets, had so often promised, and at length, in the fulness of time, accordingly sent to bring life and salvation unto us.

2. Had our Saviour, when he took upon him to be the Messiah, done it only as an Impostor, for a secular interest, he would have assumed that character according to those notions in which the Jews expected him, because this would have been the readiest and most likely way for him to carry that interest, whatever you may suppose it to be. For the eager expectations of that people being then for such a reigning Messiah, as they had drawn a picture of in their own fancies, his only way to have gotten them to own and receive him for the Messiah, was for him exactly to have humoured them herein, and proposed himself to them just such a one as they would have had him to be. And had his intent been only to seduce them under that character, in order to serve himself of them

for a secular interest, this method is that which is so obviously necessary in such a case, that it could not have been avoided. For to do otherwise would evidently have been to put the matter in a most certain method totally to miscarry, and make the whole design impracticable. To come to them as their Messias, under a character totally differing from that in which they expected him, would be sufficient to make them, for that very reason, never to receive him. Although humility, and the debasing of a man's self, may, in other cases, be a means to court popularity, and procure the favour of the people, it could never have served in this; nor would our Saviour's taking upon him the character of the Messias, so vastly lower as to this world, than the general opinion then gave it unto him, have been of any stead to him in order thereto; but quite the contrary. For the Jews had then framed their notions of the Messias they expected, for their own sakes rather than his; suitable to those worldly interests they were most in love with, and those notions went current through the whole nation, as the true and exact description of him, by which he was to be known at his coming. And therefore for any one to propose himself to them, as the Messias, under a character totally disagreeing herefrom, would have been the readiest way for him to be told, that he was not therefore the man; and this, instead of being a means to seduce them to him, become such a reason for their rejecting him, as no art of imposture would ever have been able to master. And this, indeed, proved the main cause, that, notwithstanding our Saviour's miracles, the Jews, who daily saw them, were still hardened in their aversion against him; and it continues with them to this day the grand stumbling-block of infidelity, which they cannot get over. For they look for a Messias, that was to subdue their enemies, and deliver them from the slavery of the Romans, and by the establishment of a temporal kingdom over them, advance the

state of their nation to the highest prosperity, and their law to the highest perfection of observance, which both were capable of. But he proposed himself unto them as a Messias, who had nothing to do with this world, or any of the interests of it; and instead of the temporal kingdom they expected, claimed only a spiritual; and instead of the outward rites and ceremonies of the Mosaical law, which were all fulfilled and done away in him, taught them only to worship God in spirit and in truth. And what could more displease and alienate from him, men so eager upon this world, and the glory and riches of it, than thus, instead of conquest over enemies, extent of power, and a most flourishing state of prosperity, which they dreamed of, to preach to them of mortification, repentance, self-denial, and those other Christian virtues, in the increase of which the true prosperity of Christ's kingdom only consists; and instead of their temple, and the outward pomp and splendor of the worship there performed, which they so much valued themselves upon, and so zealously affected, thus to propose to them the worshipping of God without all this, only in that spiritual manner, which, under the numerous rites of the Mosaical law, they had not been accustomed to have any great regard unto? For this was to baulk them of the hopes they most delighted in, and put a baffle upon them in those eager expectations and most earnest desires, which their hearts had long dwelt upon. And how ill they were able to brook this, will appear by this instance in the Gospel,^d that those very same men, who, on the seeing of his miracles, were so firmly convinced of his being the Messias, that they would forthwith have taken him by force, and declared him their king; the next day after, on his preaching to them of spiritual things, and offering thereby to withdraw their minds from the perish-

^d John 6.

able things of this world, to fix them on those which endure to everlasting life, murmured against him, and would no more endure him. For their hearts were after a Messiah that should found them a temporal kingdom, and make them great and glorious, and powerful therein; and to set up a spiritual kingdom instead hereof, was not only to deprive himself of the grandeur of the other, but them also of the portion which they expected therein. And no one certainly that intended a worldly interest by such an undertaking, would ever have projected it in such a method as this, which was so totally inconsistent with it. For this would be to renounce in the very act the end which he proposed, and make the attainment of it impracticable by the very means whereby he pursued it; it would be to wave the highest in this world, to pursue after another, which no one can imagine what, and thereby totally alienate those from him, by whom alone he could hope in such a design as this to attain any at all. And therefore had a worldly end and a worldly interest been all that our Saviour aimed at, in his taking upon him to be the Messiah, whom the Jews expected, he would never so much contrary to that interest, and so much contrary to that most obvious means of carrying on such a design, have assumed that character in a manner so much differing from that under which they expected him: or could he by such a method of procedure ever have made any thing of the attempt among them, had he not on his side the power of God, as well as his mission, to make him successful therein?

Had his business only been to deceive the people for the advancing of some secular interest of his own, he would never have attempted it in so unlikely a way of succeeding, as that of abolishing the Mosaic law, to which the whole nation of the Jews were then so zealously addicted, that they could not bear the least word which might seem to derogate either from

the excellency which they conceived of it, or that opinion which they then had, and still retain, that it was to be immanubly observed by them to the end of the world. The case of Mahomet with his men of Mecca was quite otherwise, he found no such zeal in them for their old religion to struggle with; they themselves were then grown so weary of it, that the generality of them had in a manner totally exchanged it for no religion at all, at the time that Mahomet first began to propagate his imposture among them; they having then for the most part given themselves up to the opinions of the Zendikees, who in the same manner as the Epicureans among the Greeks, and too many now a-days among us, acknowledged the being of a God, but denying his providence, the immortality of the soul, and a future state, did at the same time deny all manner of necessity of paying any worship unto him. And no wonder then, if such men, who placed their all in this world, were easily brought over to a sect, whose chief aim was at worldly prosperity and worldly pleasure in the religion which they professed. This Mahomet was well enough aware of, before he started his new religion among them; and it seems to have been the greatest encouragement which emboldened him to venture on that attempt. However, since they still retained the outward form of their religion after they had deserted the substance of it, he found even from hence that opposition to his design, that to make it go down, he was forced to retain all those rites and ceremonies in his new religion, which they had been afore used to in their old; and in order hereto, he chose to make some dangerous alterations in his first establishments, as particularly in that of the Kebla, rather than ruffle his Arabians by abolishing what he found them through long usage and custom any way addicted to. For his business being to deceive the people, his care was to offer at nothing which might be difficult to go down with

them; and so must it be of every other deceiver who takes upon him to act the like part. But in every particular it was quite otherwife with our Saviour, and those whom he first preached his Gospel unto. For the Jews having undergone several terrible scourges from the hand of God for the neglect of that law which he had given them, were from their former too much disregard of it, then grown into the contrary extreme of being with exceeding superstition and bigotry too much devoted to it. They then looked on it with the same veneration as they still do, to be an immutable law never to be altered, that the Messias himself at his coming should not make the least change therein, but that the glory of his kingdom should chiefly consist in the perfection of its observance, and the exact performance of the worship it prescribed; and for any one to advance any doctrine contrary hereto, was reckoned no less than ^c blasphemy among them. And therefore had our Saviour only consulted flesh and blood in the mission which he undertook, had he had no other design therein than a secular interest and a worldly end, he would never have opposed himself against the violent current of such predominant opinions, as he found then reigning among them whom he first preached his gospel unto, or ever durst have offered at the abolition of that law which they were so violently bigotted unto. Had he come to deceive them as a Seducer, the very nature of the thing must necessarily have directed him to a quite contrary method, that is, to sooth and colloque with them whom he came to impose upon; to have contradicted no opinion they were violent for, nor opposed any doctrine which they were zealously affected to, but to have studied their humours and learned their notions, and so framed and suited all his doctrines according thereto, as might best take

^c Acts 6. v. 13.

to draw them over to the end designed. To have done otherwise would have been to set priest and people against him, as an enemy to their religion, and a blasphemer of their law. And as our Saviour found it so in the result, so it must have been obvious to any one in his case to have foreseen it from the beginning. And therefore since notwithstanding this, he took this method, so contrary to the whole end and design of one that intends a cheat upon the people; and without having any regard to that zeal with which the Jews were then so violently bigotted to their law, or that rage of resentment which they were ready to express against whatsoever in the least should derogate from it, did boldly preach unto them such doctrines as totally disannulled it; this manifestly proves he could have no interest of his own to serve upon them in this undertaking, nor that he had any other reason for his entering on it, but that he was sent of God so to do.

The grand and fundamental doctrine of the religion which Jesus Christ left his church, was that of his death and passion, whereby he made atonement for our sins, and delivered us from the punishment which was due unto us for them. By this means only he proposed to save us, that is, from sin, the devil, and eternal death; and by this conflict only did he undertake to subdue these our enemies for us, and on that conquest to found us a kingdom, which should make us holy and righteous here, and for ever blessed with him in glory hereafter. This was the whole end and purpose of our Saviour's mission; this he frequently foretold to his disciples, and on this was founded the whole religion which he taught them. And can any one say he could have a design of secular interest for himself in such a religion as this, which could have no being but by his dying for it, or any reason for its establishment among men, till he had laid down his life for the completing of it? To say there was any thing of worldly interest

in this, would be to charge it on his cross, and place it in that bitter and ignominious death which he underwent thereon. Men sometimes put their lives to great hazard for the interests of this world, but for a man purposely to design death for such an end, and part with this world in such a manner as Christ did, for the sake of any thing that this world hath, is a thing which was never yet heard of, and is in itself so contrary to the most obvious dictates both of reason and nature, that no one can be so absurd as to imagine it possible for any man so to do.

But that which I know you will say in this case, is, that it was not Christ himself, but his disciples after his death that made this a part of his religion; that he intended no such thing in the undertaking he entered on, that it should end in his death, and be completed by his crucifixion; but that this happening unto him, those who kept up his party, and propagated his religion after him, foisted this thereinto, to save the ignominy of his death, and serve themselves of it, for the better carrying on of their designs thereby. And if so, then the imposture must be shifted from him to his disciples. And in this case the same enquiry must still be made, what advantage could they propose to themselves herefrom? For if Christ's having no self-design or worldly interest in the religion which he taught, be of any force to acquit him of being guilty of imposture therein (as it must with every man of unprejudiced reason) it must also be of force to acquit them of the same charge who propagated it after him. And what worldly interest is it which they could possibly have in this matter? If you say empire, how improbable is it, that a few poor fishermen, without any manner of foundation either of power, riches, or interest with others, for the carrying on of such a design, should ever frame in their thoughts the least imagination tending thereto, especially at that time when the Roman

empire, being in its utmost heighth and vigour, had the major part of the then known world united under its command, to crush the greatest attempts of this nature, which might be made against it? If riches and honour be alleged as their end, I must desire you to tell me how this could be a means to gain them? or whether any one of them ever attained to either thereby? If we examine into the accounts which we have of their lives and actions, we shall find them journeying about the world from place to place in great poverty, and under all the difficulties and pressures of it, to discharge that apostleship which was committed unto them, and in every place where they came, to be loaded with contempt, oppression, and persecution for the sake of that religion which they taught. Had riches and honour been the end proposed for all this, certainly after having experienced, by the ill success, how improper means they had taken in order thereto, some of them would have desisted from the enterprize, and no longer have pursued a design which could not answer its end. But you cannot bring us an instance of any one of them that did this. No, they still went on in the work which they had undertaken, and without being wearied by the poverty they laboured under, or in the least discouraged by that contempt, scorn, and persecution which they every where met with, all constantly persevered to preach that Gospel which they had received, even to their lives end; and not only so, but most of them laid down their lives for the sake thereof; which they would never have done, if they had not for their ministry a much higher reason than all the honour and riches of this world could ever amount unto. All that can be said of any worldly interest for them in their preaching up that religion which they propagated, is, that they were thereby made heads of the party which they drew over thereto. But alas, what advantage could this be unto them to be thus made heads of a contemned, oppressed,

and persecuted party of men, who were every where fought out for bonds, imprisonments and death? To head such a party, what is it but to expose a man's self to the greater danger, and set himself up to receive the first strokes of every persecution which was levelled against it? For in this case, those who head the party are most fought after, and the ring-leaders of it are ever made the first and the most signal examples of every severity which is designed for its oppression. And this was all that the apostles got by heading that party which they converted to the Christian Religion; and what of worldly interest could be found therein? If the heading of a party be of any advantage to a man, it must be then only when it brings him honour, or power, or riches, or some other worldly enjoyment. But to head such a party as the first Christians were, could bring none of these therewith; but, on the contrary, poverty, contempt, oppressions, and persecutions, were all the fruits, as to this world, which the apostles of our Saviour reaped thereby. And certainly on these terms to head a party, could never have been the reason to make them enter on that undertaking; or if it had, they could never under such discouragements have long continued therein.

SECT. II.

II. And thus far having examined the first mark of imposture, and, I hope, sufficiently shown it cannot belong to that holy religion which we profess: I shall now proceed to the second; that is, that it must always have wicked men for the authors of it. For thus to impose upon mankind a false religion, is the worst of cheats, and the highest injustice which can be done either to God or man; to God, because it robs him of the worship of his creatures, either by diverting it to a false object, or by directing it to him in such a false way, as cannot be accepted of before him. And to man, because it

deprives him of his God, by putting him upon such a false religion as must necessarily alienate both his mercy and his favour from him. And to do this is such a consummate piece of iniquity, that it is impossible any one can arrive thereto, without having first corrupted himself to a great degree in all things else. For such an one must have cast off all fear of God, as well as all regard of man, before he could ever offer at so great a wickedness against both. And when a man is come to this, to be sure he will stick at nothing whereby his lusts may be gratified, or any carnal interest served, which he sets his heart upon, but will make the corruptions of his mind appear in all the actions of his life, and be thoroughly wicked in every thing where his own interest, or his own designs, do not put a restraint upon him. And that Mahomet was such a one, the history of his life, which I have laid before you, sufficiently shews. But who ever yet charged ^f Jesus Christ, or his holy apostles with any thing like this? Not Celsus, not Porphyry, nor Julian, or any other of the heathens, or the Jews, who were the bitterest enemies of Christianity, and the greatest opposers of it. And to be sure could they have found any such accusation against any of them, they would never have spared to have made the utmost use of it they could, for the blasting of that religion which they taught. For it is a popular argument, which would have served their purpose among the people more than any other they could have offered unto them. And we see with what success the various sects among us serve themselves of it every day, no argument being more prevalent

^f All that the bitterest enemies of Christianity have ever objected against our Saviour, save a fabulous story of his birth, amounts to no more than this, that he was a magician, which was an invention framed only to false his working of miracles, which they could not deny in such a manner, as to make them give no reputation or authority to the doctrines which he taught.

amongst the unthinking multitude, for the beating down the reputation of any profession of religion, than the ripping up of the faults of those that teach it. To examine into all the labyrinths and abstruse speculations of reason and argument, which may be brought for or against any religion, is an obscure business, which all have not capacities for, and few care to attend to. But of good and evil every man is a judge; and where they find the teachers of any religion to be wicked and naught, it is an inference which they are all apt too precipitately to run into, that the religion must be naught also; and without any further examining into it, condemn it so to be. And I find there is nothing which you yourselves are more greedy to lay hold of, for an argument against our holy Christian religion, than the faults which you observe in some of our ministers, whose business it is to promote it. And therefore if the faults of the present teachers of Christianity be apt thus to afford so popular and prevalent an argument against it, how much more would the faults of the first founders and propagators of it have done so, had there been any such to object against them? And had there been any such, so keen and searching adversaries would never have suffered the discovery to have escaped them, or ever failed to have objected it for the serving of their turn to the utmost they were able; and it can be owing to nothing but their most unblameable innocency, that they have been secured herefrom. To say that they could not have that knowledge of their lives and actions, as was sufficient for them to discern their faults, and observe their miscarriages, will not solve the matter. Though Mahomet acted his imposture so many hundred miles within the remoter parts of Arabia, among a people who, by vast deserts, were in a manner cut off from the converse of the rest of mankind, where very few or none of any other nation ever came to spy out his actions, or observe his doings, and

where he had none else to be witnesses of them, but those only who all embraced his forgery, and became zealously addicted to it; yet all this could not serve to conceal his faults, or hide his monstrous wickednesses from being observed and recorded against him. The foregoing history gives you a large catalogue of them, and they are vouched by the authority of some of the most authentic writers of his own sect. But Christianity had not its birth in such an obscure hole, nor did the first Founder of it, or those who propagated it after him, make their first appearance among such rude and illiterate barbarians as that Impostor did, but on one of the openest stages in the world, at Jerusalem, and in the land of Judæa; and not in an age when, as formerly, that nation separated itself from all others, and had no converse with any but themselves, but when they had scattered themselves abroad, and mingled with all other nations, and also were forced to admit all other nations to mingle with them, by being made a province of the Roman empire, which brought not only soldiers and merchants of other nations among them, but also opened the gate to all others, as they should think fit to come and reside among them. And the temple at Jerusalem being that where all of the Jewish religion worshipped; this constantly brought thither from all nations those who professed it, which made a very great resort thither from all parts of the world, especially at their great festivals. And therefore just after our Saviour's sufferings at the time of Pentecost next following, we are told that there were then at Jerusalem, * ' Parthians, Medes, and ' Elamites, and the dwellers of Mesopotamia, Cappadocia, ' Pontus, Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, Libya, and Cy- ' rene, with the strangers of Rome, Cretes and Arabians.' So that to be sure nothing could be hid or concealed, which

* Acts 2. v. 9, 10, 11.

was done on so open a stage of the world, and in the sight of so many nations as were then present upon it; nor is it possible, if those who then first delivered the Christian religion to the world, had been such wicked persons as Mahomet was, and all other Impostors must be, it could ever have escaped their observation. And if it had at Jerusalem, there were other occasions enough given for a fuller discovery afterwards. For the holy apostles after our Saviour's death, did not confine themselves to Jerusalem, and the land of Judæa only, but dispersed themselves throughout the whole earth, and at Rome, at Athens, and in many other celebrated cities appeared openly, teaching the religion which they had received, and forming churches of those whom they had converted thereto, and thereby exposing their lives and actions publicly to the view of the whole world, made all mankind in a manner witnesses of what they did. And Christianity was not such an acceptable thing to the world, as to move the men of it to be so candid and good-natured to the first authors of it, as to conceal their faults, and hide their wickednesses, had there been any such in them. No, it was that which was against the lusts and pleasures, and the other evil courses of this world, more than any other religion which was ever taught therein; and this put the world as much against it, and all that adhered thereto; and therefore we find them to be a party of men not only every where spoken against, but also every where hated, opposed, and persecuted to the utmost. And when so general an odium was risen against them, and both Jews and Gentiles conspired together therein, to be sure there were not wanting abundance that made it their business to pry into their actions, and examine their practices with all that spight, unfairness, and ill interpretation of things, as is usual in such cases. And could they by all this search, inquiry, and strictest observation, have found any thing to charge upon Christ or his

this case the new religion and the new law must be calculated for this end, and be all formed and contrived in order thereto, otherwise it can have no efficiency for the obtaining of it, nor at all answer the purpose of the inventor for the compassing of what he proposed; and if it be thus calculated, ordered and contrived for such an end, that end cannot but be seen and discovered in those means. For the end and means prove each other; that is, as the nature of the end proposed shows us what means must be made use for the obtaining of it; so doth the nature of the means which we use, discover what is the end which they drive at. And as far as the means have a tendency to the end, so much must they have of that end in them; and it is not possible for him that useth the one, long to conceal the other. And therefore nothing is more obvious and common among us, than by the courses which a man takes, to discern the end which he would have. As Mahomet invented his new religion to promote his own ends; so the Alcoran, in which it is contained, sufficiently proves it, there being scarce a leaf in that book which doth not lay down some particulars, which tend to the gratifying either of the ambition or the lust of that monster who contrived it. And had the first founder of our holy Christian religion, or they who were the first propagators of it, any such end therein, the books of the New Testament, in which it is written, would have as palpably shown it. But here we challenge all the enemies of our faith to use their utmost skill to make any such discovery in them. They have already gone through the strict scrutiny of many ages, as well as of all manner of adversaries, and none have ever yet been able to tax them herewith. For instead of being calculated for the interest of this world, their whole design is to withdraw our hearts from it, and fix them upon the interest of that which is to come. And therefore the doctrines which they inculcate, are those of mortification, repent-

ance, and self-denial, which speak not unto us of fighting, bloodshed, and conquest, as the Alcoran doth, for the advancing of a temporal kingdom ; but that renouncing all the pomps and vanities, and lusts of this present world, we live soberly, righteously, and godly in the presence of him that made us ; and instead of pursuing after the perishable things of this life, we set our hearts only on those heavenly riches, which will make us great and glorious and blessed for ever hereafter. For as the kingdom of Christ is not of this world, so neither do those books, in which are written the laws of this kingdom, favour any thing thereof. The mammon of this world, and the righteousness which they prescribe us, are declared in them to be totally inconsistent. The Old Testament indeed, as being under the dispensation of carnal ordinances, which were the shadows only of those things after to come under the Gospel, treated with men suitably thereto. And therefore we find much of this world, both by way of promise as well as threat, to be proposed therein. But it is quite otherwise with the New : for in that revelation, being given to the perfecting of righteousness, all things were advanced thereby from earth to heaven, and from flesh to spirit. And therefore as the whole end of it is to make men spiritual, so are we directed thereby to look only to spiritual and heavenly blessings for the reward hereof. Had our Saviour proposed victory, or riches, or carnal pleasures to his followers, as Mahomet did, then indeed his law would have sufficiently favoured of this world, to make men suspect that he aimed at nothing else thereby. But he was so far herefrom, that instead of this, the whole tenour of his doctrine runs the quite contrary way, we being told of nothing else through the whole New Testament, but of tribulations, afflictions, and persecutions, which shall attend all such, as to this world, who faithfully set their hearts to become his disciples ; and the experience of all ages since hath

ufficiently verified the prediction. And indeed the very religion which he hath taught us, is of that holiness, that according to the course of this wicked world it naturally leads us thereinto. And how then can it be said, that any thing of worldly interest can be contained either in this religion, or those holy books in which it is written ? •

I cannot deny, that there are some men so crafty and cunning in pursuing their interest, that it shall not easily be discerned in the means, what it is which they drive at for their end. But how great a compass soever such may fetch about to the point which they aim at, or in what bye and secret paths soever they make towards it ; yet if the means which they make use of, have any tendency thither, they can never be so totally blended, but there will always appear in them enough of the end to make the discovery to any accurate observer ; and at length when the plot grows ripe for execution, and the designer begins to offer at the putting himself in possession of what he proposed (as all such designs must at last) the whole scene must then be laid open, and every one will be able to see thereinto. And therefore if you will have it that the holy Apostles and Evangelists, who were the first penners of the New Testament, were such cunning and crafty men, as to be able thus artfully to conceal their designs in those books, which you suppose they wrote of purpose to promote them (which cannot reasonably be imagined of men of their education and condition in the world, they being all, except St. Paul and St. Luke, of the meanest occupations among the people, and totally unlearned) yet if they contrived those books with any tendency towards those designs (and it cannot be conceived how otherwise they could help forward to the obtaining of them) it is impossible they could thus have passed thorough so many ages, and all the strict examinations of Heathens, Jews, Atheists, and all other adversaries, who have so strenuously

endeavoured to overthrow their authority, and no discovery be made hereof. For supposing at first, under the mask of renouncing the world, they might a while conceal their designs for the interest of it (which is the utmost you can say in this case) yet this could not last long : for if this were all they designed by teaching that holy religion, and writing those books in which it is contained, some time or other they must have put those designs in execution, otherwise they would have been in vain laid ; sometime or other they must have endeavoured by them to obtain what they aimed at, otherwise the whole projection of them would have been to no purpose ; and if they ever did so (as to be sure they would, had this been their end) then, as it happens in all other stratagems of the like nature, with how much artifice soever they might conceal what they intended in the contrivance, all at last must have come out in the execution ; and when they began to put themselves in possession of the end they aimed at, or at least made any offer towards it, the whole cheat must then have been unmasked, and every one would have been able to see into the depth thereof. But when did our Saviour, or any of his holy apostles, by virtue of any of those doctrines delivered down unto us in the books of the New Testament, ever put themselves in possession of any such worldly interest ? Or when did they ever make the least offer in order thereto ? Have any of the ancient enemies of our holy religion (and it had bitter ones enough from the very beginning) ever recorded any such against them ? Or have any other ever since from any good authority, or any authority at all, ever been able to tax them herewith ? Or is it possible their names could have remained untainted of this charge amidst so many adversaries, who have now for near seventeen hundred years stood up in every age to oppose that holy religion which they have delivered unto us, had they in the least been guilty hereof ? Nay, hath

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it been so much as ever said of them, that they practised as to this world, any otherwise than they taught, or ever dealt with the interests of it in any other manner, than totally to renounce them? Or had they at all any other portion in this life, than that of persecution, affliction, and tribulation, as it is foretold in those holy books that they should? And what then can be a greater madness, than to suppose that men should lay such a deep design, as that of inventing a new religion, and undergo all that vast trouble and danger, which they did, to impose it on the world for the sake of a worldly interest, and yet never put themselves in possession of that interest, or ever make the least offer towards it?

If you say, that the whole end of the religion was only to gain the party, and that the steps to the interest were to be made afterwards; I still go on to ask, who can tell us, after the party was gained, of any such steps that were ever made, or of any the least offer tending thereto? Were not the first Christians for many ages after the first founding of our faith, what they ought still to be, men that used this world as if they used it not, who lived in it without being of it, and did truly what they vowed in their baptism, renounce all the pomps and vanities, and lusts thereof, faithfully to observe that holy law which they had received? And in this they persevered so steadfastly, that even their very enemies admired the righteousness of their lives, and bore witness thereto, and the most cruel per-

* Plinii Epist. lib. 10. Ep. 97.—‘Hanc fuisse summam vel culpæ suæ vel erroris, quod essent soliti stato die ante lucem convenire, Carmenque Christo quasi Deo dicere secum invicem, sequi sacramento non in scelus aliquod obstringere, sed ne furta, ne lascivicia, ne adulteria committerent, ne fidem fallerent, ne depositum appellati abnegarent.’ In like manner they were also vindicated by Serenius Granianus, proconsul of Asia, in his epistle to the emperor Adrian. Euseb. Hist. Ecclesiast. lib. 4. c. 8, & 9.

secutors could never beat them therefrom, but they still went on in the observance of their holy religion without having any other design therein, than to practise that righteousness which it taught, and for three hundred years together stood firm thereto against all those terrible storms of persecution which were raised against them, till at length by the holiness of their lives, and the constancy of their sufferings, they made a conquest over their very persecutors, and brought over the world unto them. And are not our principles still the same, and also, (thanks be to God, notwithstanding the corruptions of the present age) the practice of many thousands still among us, who I doubt not will be as ready to undergo the same sufferings those primitive Christians did, whenever God shall try them for that holy religion which they profess, as they now are to observe the righteousness thereof. But supposing this had been all otherwise, and the mammon of this world, and not the righteousness of God, were really the end for which our religion was designed; yet to renounce the world to gain a party, and afterwards make use of this party to gain the world, is a project so unfeasible, that the former part of it must necessarily have overthrown the latter, whenever it had been attempted. For when men had been drawn over to a party under the specious pretence of renouncing the world, and been instructed and firmly fixed in this principle, to make those very same men afterwards to serve their turn for the gaining of a worldly interest, would be to make their doctrine and their practice so monstrously to interfere, as must necessarily have broken all into pieces, and destroyed the whole design. Certainly, had they any such design, they would never have thus

By Antoninus Pius in his epistle to the commons of Asia. Justin Martyr, Apol. 2. and even by the heathen oracles themselves Euseb. in vita Constantini, lib. 2. c. 50, & 51.

possessed their disciples with such principles against it by the religion which they taught them; and in that they did so, I think nothing can be a more evident demonstration, that they could never intend any such end thereby. Mahomet knew well enough, this was not a way to carry what he designed, and therefore openly owned in his religion, what he aimed at thereby, and made his law to speak for that empire and lust, which he desired to enjoy; and so when he had made his religion to obtain, he gained by virtue thereof the whole which he projected by it, and became possessed of the empire of all Arabia for the gratifying of his ambition, and as many women as he pleased for the satisfying of his lust, which were the two ends which he drove at in the whole imposture. And had Jesus Christ and his apostles had any such design in the religion which they taught, they must in the same manner have made their religion speak for it, or else it could never have served their purpose for the obtaining of it. And if their religion had ever offered any such thing, it must necessarily have appeared in the books in which it is written.

And 2dly, If they had been so wicked, as thus to impose upon the world a false religion for the promoting of their own interest, as that interest must have appeared in the contexture of the religion itself, and in those books in which it was written, so also must their wickedness. For words and writings being the outward expressions of our inward conceptions, there is that connection between them, that although the former may often disguise the latter, they can never so totally conceal them, but every accurate observer may still be able through the one to penetrate into the other, and by what a man utters, whether in speech or writing, see what he is at the bottom, do what he can to prevent it. There are indeed some that act the hypocrite so cunningly, as to dissemble the greatest wickedness under words, writings, and actions too, that speak the

quite contrary. But this always is such a force upon their inclinations, and so violent a bar upon their inward passions and desires, that nature will frequently break through in spite of all art, and even speak out the truth amidst the highest pretences to the contrary. And there is no hypocrite, how cunningly soever he may act his part, but must this way very often betray himself. For wickedness being always uppermost in such a man's thoughts, and ever pressing forward to break forth into expression, it will frequently have its vent in what that man speaks, and in what he writes, do what he can to the contrary; the care, caution, and cunning of no man in this case being sufficient totally to prevent it. Furthermore, there is no man thus wicked, that can have that knowledge of righteousness, as thoroughly to act it under the mask, with that exactness as he who is truly righteous, lives and speaks it in reality. His want of experience in the practice, must in this case lead him into a great many mistakes and blunders in the imitation. And this is a thing which generally happens to all that act a part, but never more than in matters of religion, in which are many particulars so peculiar to the righteous, as none are able to reach them, but those only who are really such. And supposing there were any that could, yet there will ever be that difference between what is natural, and what is artificial; and between that which is true, real, and sincere, and that which is false, counterfeit, and hypocritical, that nothing is more easy than for any one that will attend it, to discern the one from the other. And therefore were Jesus Christ and his apostles such persons as this charge of imposture must suppose them to be, it is impossible but that the doctrines which they taught, and the books which they wrote, must make the discovery, and the New Testament would, as a standing record against them in this case, afford a multitude of instances to convict them hereof. That the Alcoran doth so as to Maho-

met, nothing is more evident ; a strain of rapine, bloodshed and lust running through the whole book, which plainly proves the author of it to be altogether such a man as the charge of imposture must necessarily suppose him to be. And were the first founder of our holy religion, or the writers of those books in which its doctrines are contained, such men as he, both their doctrines and their books would as evidently prove it against them. But here I must again challenge you, and all other the adversaries of our holy religion, to shew us any one particular in it, that can give the least foundation to such a charge, any one word in all the books of the New Testament, that can afford the least umbrage or pretence thereto. Let what is written in them be tried by that which is the touchstone of all religions, I mean that religion of nature and reason, which God hath written in the hearts of every one of us from the first creation ; and if it varies from it in any one particular, if it prescribes any one thing which may in the minutest circumstance thereof be contrary to its righteousness ; I will then acknowledge this to be an argument against us, strong enough to overthrow the whole cause, and make all things else that can be said for it, totally ineffectual for its support. But it is so far from having any such flaw therein, that it is the perfectest law of righteousness which was ever yet given unto mankind, and both in commanding of good, as well as forbidding of evil, vastly exceeds all others that went before it, and prescribes much more to our practice in both, than the wisest and highest moralist was ever able without it to reach in speculation. For,

1st, As to the forbidding of evil, it is so far from indulging, or in the least allowing us in any practice that favours hereof, that it is the only law which is so perfectly broad in the prohibition, as adequately to reach whatsoever may be evil in the practice ; and without any exception, omission, or defect,

folutely, fully, and thoroughly forbids unto us, whatsoever may have but the least taint of corruption therein; and therefore it not only restrains all the overt-acts of iniquity, but also every imagination of the heart within, which in the least tends thereto; and in its precepts prohibits us not only the doing or speaking of evil, but also the harbouring or receiving into our minds the least thought or desire thereafter; whereby it so effectually provides against all manner of iniquity, that it plucks it up out of every one of us by the very roots, and so makes the man pure and clean, and holy altogether, without allowing the least favour of evil to be remaining in him: and every one of us would be thoroughly such, could we be but as perfect in our obedience to this law, as it is perfectly given unto us. And,

2dly, As to the commanding of good, its prescriptions are, that we employ our time, our powers, and all other talents intrusted with us, to the best we are able, both to give glory unto God, and also to show charity unto men; and this last not only to our friends, relations, and benefactors, but in general to all mankind, even to our enemies, and those who despitefully use us and persecute us; and hereby it advanceth us to that heighth of perfection in all holiness and goodness, as to render us like the angels of light in our service unto God, and like God himself in our charity to man. For it directs us in the same manner as the angels to worship and serve our God to the utmost ability of our nature; and in the same manner as God, to make our goodness to men extend unto all, without exception or reserve, as far as they are capable of receiving it from us.

And can any man think it possible that a religion which so thoroughly and fully forbids all evil, and in so high and perfect a manner prescribes us all good, could ever be the product of a wicked mind? The fruit is too good to proceed from so

corrupt a root, and the effect vastly above the efficiency of such a cause ever to produce it. For can it possibly be imagined, that a wicked man could either have inclination to do so much for the promoting of that righteousness which all his passions and desires so violently run counter unto? Or if he would, that such a one could ever be so well acquainted with all the ways thereof, as so exactly to prescribe them? If it be so difficult for such a one to conceal his inclinations in his expressions; if it be so hard for him, when he vents himself into words or writings, not to let loose something in them of what he really is (as I have already shown) how can any copy be drawn from such a mind, but what must in some feature or other resemble the original; or any thing at all proceed from thence, but what must carry with it some savour of the iniquity thereof? Set but such a one to write a letter, and he will scarce be able to do it without putting so much of his passions and his temper into it, as that we may read from thence what he is, as every man's experience may tell him, that corresponds with such; and how much more then may we be assured will he lay himself open, when he hath the large scope of a book to express himself in, and especially when that book is of such a nature, as gives him the fullest occasion, and the most inviting opportunity so to do? And what book can be more such, than that which is to propose a new law to mankind? in the writing of such a book, if ever, certainly the wicked man will show himself, and in the same manner as Mahomet did, conform his laws to his own inclinations, and prescribe such rules of living to others, as may best justify him in those which he himself follows. And although he should not intend any such thing, though he should not design so to do (and it is hard to imagine of such a man, that he should not,) yet at least the prevailing bent of his passions, and the corruption of his judgment, which always follows therefrom,

must necessarily lead him thereinto ; it being, morally speaking, altogether impossible, but that the wicked man must appear in what the wicked man doth ; and the deeds, words, and writings which proceed from such a one, must in some measure favour of what he is. And therefore if there be nothing in the law of our holy religion (as I hope I have fully shown that there is not) which can make the least discovery of any such thing, nothing that can afford the least pretence for such a charge against it, where so large a scope is given for it ; this sufficiently proves, that neither the first Founder of the Christian religion, nor those who first wrote it in the books of the New Testament, in which we now have it, could possibly be wicked men, and consequently not such Impostors as you would have them to be.

But here I know it will be objected, that there is no necessity that all Impostors should be as wicked as Mahomet ; and therefore though Jesus Christ and his apostles were no such wicked persons, yet however they may be still Impostors for all that. For, first, it hath happened that very just and good men have had recourse to imposture, to bring to pass and establish their most commendable designs ; as we have an instance in Minos king of Crete, and another in Numa king of Rome, both which, to give the greater authority to their laws, pretended to have had them by divine revelation. And, secondly, you will say, it is possible a man may be an Impostor by enthusiasm, and mistake, and falsely impose things for divine revelation, not out of a wicked design to deceive others, but that he is really deceived herein himself. And if in these two cases a man that is not wicked may be an Impostor ; you will urge, that though Jesus Christ and his apostles were not wicked men, yet this will not prove them not to have been Impostors, because it is possible, that in one of these two cases they might have been such.

In order to the clearing of the first of these objections, I desire you would consider these three following particulars.

1. That in every religion there are these two parts to be observed, very distinct from each other. 1. The religion itself. And, 2. The means whereby it is promoted and propagated among men.

2. When the imposture is only in the former of these two ; and a true religion, or at least one that is really believed to be such, is promoted and propagated among men by means of imposture ; that is, by feigning a divine revelation where there is none, or by counterfeiting miracles, or by any other such means tending to deceive men thereinto ; this amounts to no higher than a pious fraud, which out of an over-hot and inconsiderate zeal some men have made use of for the promoting of the best ends. And such men, for the sake of such ends, may still be denominated good and righteous in the main, how much soever they have been out in making use of such means to promote them.

3. When the imposture is in the end as well as in the means ; and not only the revelation pretended, but also the religion itself is all false, counterfeit, and feigned ; this amounts to such an imposture as is totally wicked, without any mixture of good therein. In the former case, where the imposture is only in the means, there is a good end designed, and therefore something still from whence the person using it may be denominated good ; but where the imposture is in both, it is wickedness all over, without any thing at all in it to exempt him from being perfectly wicked that maketh use thereof.

Which particulars being premised, my answer to the objection is as followeth.

1. I do acknowledge it to be related by ¹ authors of good

¹ Plato in *Minoe* & in primo *Dialogo de legibus*. Dionysius Halicarnassensis, lib. 1. Strabo, lib. 16. Valerius Maximus, l. 1. c. 2.

credit, that Minos king of Crete, when he first framed the laws of his country, to give them the greater authority, used to retire into a cave on mount Dicte, and from thence to bring them forth to the Cretans, as if they had been delivered to him by Jupiter. And that Numa, when he founded the laws of Rome^m practised the same art, pretending to have received them from the nymph Egeria, that so he might procure them to be received by the Romans with the greater veneration. And by this device they both obtained their end, in bringing very rude and barbarous people to submit to those good orders and rules which they prescribed for their living civilly, peaceably, and justly together. But this, although it were a fraud in the means, yet as far as it related only to a political end, belongs to another matter, and doth not at all fall within that argument of religion which we are now treating of.

2. As to the laws of Numa, I acknowledge that they reach not only matters of state, but those of religion also; and that the whole method of the old Roman religion was regulated and stated by them; but that Numa founded any new religion is what I utterly deny. For Numa left no other religion behind him in Rome at his death, than that very same heathenism which he found there at his first coming thither to be king. For the city having been then but newly founded, and the people made up of a collection of the refuse and scum of divers nations there gathered together, they were as much out of order in matters of religion, as in those belonging to the civil government; and all that Numa did, when he came to reign over them, was to make laws to regulate both; and therefore, as he founded several wholesome constitutions for the orderly governing of the state, so also did he for the regular worshipping of the gods then acknowledged among them,

^m Plutarchus in vita Numæ, & Dionysius Halicarnassæus, lib. 1.

without making any essential alteration in the religion afore practised by them. For had he done so, then the religion of the Romans must have differed from the religion of the other cities of Italy, which we find it did not. For they communicated with each other in their worship, as they did also with the Greeks. And in truth, the old Roman religion was no other than the Greek heathenism, the same which was practised in Greece, and in all those countries which were planted with colonies from thence, as almost all Italy was at that time. And therefore the Romans, as well as the rest of the cities of Italy, looked on Delphos as a principal place of their worship, with the same veneration that the Greeks did, and had frequent recourse thither on religious accounts, as the Roman histories on many occasions acquaint us. And this religion, Numa, while he lived among his Sabines, being accurately versed in, and also a diligent practiser of it; on his coming to Rome, finding the Romans all out of order in that little which they had of it (for during the reign of Romulus they minded little else but fighting, and therefore had not leisure, or perchance any great regard for this matter) he not only instructed them more fully in it, according as it was received in the neighbouring nations, but also framed several rules and constitutions for their more regular and orderly practice of it, which did no more make the old heathenism of the Romans to be a new religion, than the body of canons given us by King James the First, for the more orderly regulating of our worship and discipline, makes our religion a new Christianity. Only Numa, the better to make his constitutions to obtain among those barbarous people for whom he made them, pretended to have been instructed in them by a divine person; and in this he practised a pious fraud; but was by no means guilty of such an imposture as we are now treating of. For he taught them no new religion, but only the very same Greek heathenism

which he had received with the rest of the people of Italy from their forefathers, and really believed to be that very true religion whereby God was to be served ; and therefore notwithstanding the deceit he made use of, he might from the end which he proposed, and which he really effected thereby, to the civilizing of a very barbarous sort of people, be still reckoned a just and good man ; and to give him his due, he really was one of the most excellent personages of that age in which he lived ; and first sowed among the Romans the seeds of that virtue with which they so eminently signalized themselves for so many ages after. But,

3. Jesus Christ and his apostles took on them not only to be messengers sent of God, but also to teach a new religion to the world ; and therefore if they were Impostors, they must be so in the largest sense, both in respect of the religion itself, as well as the means whereby they promoted it. And in this case there could be nothing to excuse them from being altogether as wicked as I have alleged. Where the religion is true, or really believed so to be, there is a pious intention in the end, which may speak some goodness in him that useth fraud to promote it ; and such a goodness as greatly exceeds the obliquity of the fault which he committeth about it ; and therefore, although he cannot on the account of the good be excused from the evil (for it is always a scandal to religion to be promoted by falsehood) yet still he must be reckoned more commendable from the one, than faulty from the other ; and in this case there will still be room enough left from the goodness of the end designed, and the piety of the intention, to denominate the man good and righteous in the main, notwithstanding the fault committed in using such means to bring it to effect. But where the religion is all forgery and falsehood, as well as the means of promoting it, deceit and fraud, the imposture then becomes so totally and perfectly wicked, with-

out the least mixture of good therein, as must necessarily denominate the authors and first propagators of it to be perfectly wicked also.

If you say, that such a perfect imposture as this can have any good end, for the sake whereof the authors of it may be freed from that charge of wickedness which I lay upon them, that good end must be either the honour of God, or the benefit of men. But how can God be more dishonoured than by a false religion? Or how can men be more mischieved than by having the practice of it imposed on them, whereby they must thus constantly dishonour, and consequently offend and lose the favour of him that made them? An imposture in this case hath that aggravation from the object it is about, as well as from the perfection of iniquity which is in the act, that supposing it could be made productive of any good end, that good would be so vastly over-balanced by the wickedness of the means, that it would be of no weight in comparison thereof, or at all avail to the rendering of those that shall make use of it, less wicked than I have said. But when a man can thus far proceed in wickedness towards God, as to be the author of constant dishonour unto him in a false worship; and towards men, as to ensnare them into all that mischief which must be consequential hereto; it must necessarily imply such a thorough disregard of both, as every good intention, in respect of either, must be inconsistent with. And therefore, if it be possible that such a wicked imposture can ever be made the means to a good end, it is scarce to be conceived how they who are so wicked, as to be the authors of it, could ever intend any such good thereby.

But further, if the authors of such an imposture as we are now treating of, can be less wicked than I have said, on the account of any good which you pretend they may design thereby; I desire to know among what sort of men you will

place them, while you thus plead their excuse. For they must be one of these three ; that is, either Atheists, Deists, or believers of an instituted religion.

1. If you say they are Atheists, that word alone contains enough to prove them perfectly wicked, whatever can be said to the contrary. It is indeed agreeable enough to the principles of this sort of men, that such an imposture as we are treating of, may laudably be made use of to a good end. For they hold that all religion is nothing else but a device of politicians to keep the world in awe. But if the Atheist be the deviser, what intention of good can the device carry therewith ? None certainly towards God, since he utterly denies his being ; nor can it in this case have any towards men, since by denying him for whose sake it is that we are to do good to others, he casts off therewith all the reason and obligation which he hath, abstractive of his own interest, of doing any such at all. All the good therefore that such a one can aim at, must totally center in himself to advance his own enjoyments, and gratify his own lusts in all those things which his corrupt affections carry him after ; and to enjoy these without restraint of laws, or fear of punishment, being that alone which is the real and true cause that makes any man deny that supreme and infinitely good and just Being, whom all things else prove : whoever is an Atheist, must be perfectly wicked before he can be such ; and what is there which can, while in that impiety, ever give him a better character afterwards ?

2. If you say they are Deists, such as you profess yourselves to be ; your main principle is against all instituted religion whatever, as if God were dishonoured, and man injured by every thing of this nature practised among us ; and can you then think, that any who are thus persuaded, can without being first corrupted to a great degree of impiety, as well as hypocrisy, ever become themselves (so contrary to their own

sentiments) on any pretence whatsoever, the authors and teachers of such a religion among us ?

3. But if you place them among those who are believers of an instituted religion, they must abolish that which they believe to be true, before they can introduce that by imposture which they know to be false. And this must be the case of Jesus Christ and his apostles, if they were such Impostors as you hold them to be. For they were educated and brought up in the Jewish religion, which they believed to be from God, and the whole tenor of the religion which they taught, supposeth it so to be ; and that it was the only true way whereby God was to be worshipped by them, till they delivered their new revelations, which totally abolished this religion, and established the Christian in its stead ; and therefore if those revelations were not true and real, as they pretended they were ; but all forged and counterfeited by them, as you say ; they must abolish a religion, which they believed to be true, to make way for that which they knew to be false, and thereby become wilfully and knowingly, according to their own belief, the authors of leading men from saving truths, into damning errors, to the utter destruction of their souls for ever ; and also of depriving God of that acceptable worship, whereby he was truly honoured according to his own appointment, to introduce in its stead a false superstition of their own devising, which must be a constant dishonour unto him as long as practised among us. And if Jesus Christ and his apostles were such Impostors, as all this imports ; and such they must be if they were Impostors at all ; they must be guilty of that impiety towards God, as well as that injustice towards men herein, as must necessarily suppose them the wickedest of men before they could arrive hereto ; and therefore if they were not such wicked men, this abundantly demonstrates, they could not be such Impostors as you charge them to be.

As to the second objection, that a man may be an Impostor through enthusiasm and mistake, and falsely impose things for divine revelations, not out of a wicked design to deceive others, but that he is herein really deceived himself; and that therefore there is no necessity that all Impostors should be such wicked persons as I have alleged: my answer hereto is,

1. I do acknowledge that enthusiasm hath carried men into very strange conceits and extravagancies upon the foundation of a religion already established, as we have instances enough hereof in the Anabaptists of Germany, the Quakers here with us, the ^a Batenists among the Mahometans, and in some of the Recluses of the church of Rome. But that enthusiasm could ever go so far, as to fancy a divine revelation for the establishing of a new religion, and upon such a fancy propagate that religion in the world, as if it came from God, is that which I cannot believe; and there is no instance, that I know of, that can be given hereof. But,

2dly, Allowing it possible, this objection then, as applied to the case in hand, must suppose Jesus Christ, and his apostles, to have been deceived by enthusiasm into the religion which they taught; and that therefore, although they were by no means such wicked men as a wilful imposture must suppose them to be, yet still they might be Impostors by mistake; and being by enthusiasm so far deluded, as to think that to come to them from God by divine revelation, which had no other birth but from their own wild fancies, might preach it to men as such, not out of a wicked design to deceive, but that they were really herein deceived themselves. But is it possible for

^a They were a sort of Mahometan enthusiasts in the East, who followed the light within them in the same manner as the Quakers with us, and therefore were called Batenists from the Arabic word, *Baten, intus*. And on this principle they did all the villainies imaginable, pretending an impulse thereto from this light within them.

any man to conceive, that so grave, so serious, and so wisely a framed religion as Christianity is, could ever be the spawn of enthusiasm? Whatsoever is the product of that, useth ever to be like the parent, wild and extravagant in all its parts, often disagreeing with all manner of reason, and often as much with itself. But Christianity is in all its parts as rational as it is good, giving us the justest notions of God, the best precepts of our duty towards him, and the exactest rules of living honestly and righteously with each other, and hath a thorough conformity to itself in every particular of it; on which account it hath been approved and admired for the excellency of its compofure, and the wisdom of its constitutions, even by the best and wisest of those who never submitted thereto; and therefore always carries with it marks and evidences enough in the very nature of it, sufficiently to prove it vastly above the power of such a cause ever to produce it.

3. The Founder and first teachers of Christianity gave such evidences for the truth thereof, as enthusiasm could never produce. For can enthusiasm raise the dead to life again, cure all manner of diseases, and work such other miracles as Christ and his apostles did? Had they by enthusiasm been mistaken in the doctrines which they taught, certainly God would never have wrought such wonderful works by their hands as give testimony thereto.

4. Several of the principal articles of our faith depend upon such matters of fact, as allow no room for enthusiasm to take place in them; as that of the resurrection of our Saviour from the dead, his ascension into heaven, and the descent of the Holy Ghost in the gift of tongues. For in such things as these, which men see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and feel with their hands (as one of the apostles did the very wounds of our Saviour after his resurrection) no enthusiasm can ever lead men into a mistake. For can it possibly be said,

that it was only by enthusiasm that five hundred men together saw Christ after he was risen again from the dead? Or that it was by enthusiasm that his apostles saw him ascend up into heaven from mount Olivet in the presence of them all at noon-day? Or that it was only by enthusiasm that the same apostles on the day of Pentecost received the gift of tongues by the descent of the Holy Ghost upon them, so as to be able to converse with all the several nations then at Jerusalem in their own languages, without ever having learned any thing of them? To say that men could any way be mistaken in such things as these, will be to deny the certainty of sense, and overthrow the foundations of all manner of knowledge whatever. It must therefore be said as to these particulars, as it must also of all the miracles of our Saviour, which give testimony to the doctrines which he taught, that his apostles, who testified them unto the world, and upon the credit of them built up that religion which they delivered unto us, did either see them really done as they relate, or they did not see them. If they did see them, no enthusiasm could ever make them be mistaken therein; and if they did not, they must be altogether as bad Impostors as Mahomet himself, in testifying them unto us; and what but as great wickedness as his, could ever induce them so to do?

SECT. IV.

IV. The next mark of an imposture is, that it must unavoidably contain in it several palpable falsities, whereby may be made appear the falsity of all the rest. For whoever invents a lie, can never do it so cunningly and knowingly, but still there will be some flaw or other left in it, which will expose it to a discovery; and no man who frames an invention, can ever secure it herefrom without two qualifications, which no man can have; and they are, 1st. A thorough knowledge

of all manner of truths. And *2dly*, such an exact memory, as can bring them all present to his mind, whenever there shall be an occasion. For to make the lie pass without contradiction, he must make it put on a seeming agreement with all other truths whatever. And how can any one do this without knowing all truths, and having them also all ready and present in his mind to consider them in order thereto? And since no man is sufficient for this; no man is sufficient so to frame a lie, but he will always put something or other into it, which will palpably prove it to be so. For if there be but any one known truth in the whole scheme of nature with which it interferes, this must make the discovery; and there is no man that forgeth an imposture, but makes himself liable this way to be convicted of it. This is the method whereby we distinguish supposititious authors from those which are genuine, and fabulous writers from true historians. For there is always something in such, which disagrees from known truths, to make the discovery; some flaw always left, in spite of the utmost care and foresight of the forger, that betrays the cheat. Thus Annius' imposture of his Berosus, Manetho and Megasthenes became detected, and so also we know the Tuscan Antiquities of Inghiramius to be a cheat of the like nature. And by the same rule is it that we receive Salust, Tacitus, and Suetonius for true historians, and reject others as writers of fables, and of no authority with us: and if we examine the Alcoran of Mahomet by the same method, nothing can be more plainly convicted of falsity and imposture, than that must be by it. For although in that book he allows both the Old and the New Testament to be of divine authority, yet in a multitude of instances he differs from both: I mean not in matters of law and religion, for here his design is to differ; but in matters of fact and history, which if once true, must evermore be the same. They have a fetch indeed to bring him off, by

saying, that the Jews and the Christians corrupted those holy books, and therefore where he relates things otherwise than they do, he doth there restore truth, and not vary from it. But certainly this will not hold, where by a very gross blunder, he makes the Virgin ° Mary the mother of our Saviour, to be the same with Miriam, the sister of Moses. For this would be to put the gospel so close upon the heels of the law, as to allow no time for the taking place of this latter, before it would have been totally abolished by the former. But what most discovers his imposture, are the monstrous mistakes which he makes in the moral part thereof. For he allows fornication, and justifies adultery by his law, and makes war, rapine, and slaughter to be the main part of the religion which he taught; which being contrary to the nature of God, from whom he says he received it, and contrary to that law of unalterable and eternal truth, which he hath written in the hearts of all of us from the beginning; the obvious principles of every man's reason convict him of falsehood herein, and thereby manifestly prove all the rest to be nothing else but an abominable impiety of his own invention. And were the religion of Jesus Christ, as delivered to us in the New Testament, an imposture like this, it must have the same flaws therein, that

° Alcoran, c. 3. where observe, that through all that chapter, in every place, where the French, and out of that the English translation of the Alcoran, hath Joachim, in the original Arabic it is Amran, and from thence this chapter in the original is called *Suralo'l Amran*, i. e. *the Chapter of Amran*. But in both these translations it is called the chapter of Joachim. For Mahomet mistaking the Virgin Mary to be the same with Miriam, the sister of Moses, makes Amran to be her father. But Ryer, the French translator, very imprudently taking upon him to correct the Impostor's blunder, puts Joachim in the place of Amran, and thereby gives us a false version, where it is very material in order to the exposing of that imposture, to know the true. And the English him herein.

is, many falsities in matter of fact, and more in doctrine, and all his prophecies would be without truth in the original, or verification in the event. And when you can make out any one of these particulars against it, then we will be ready to say the same thereof that you do, that all is cheat and imposture, and no credit or faith is any longer to be given thereto.

And 1st, As to the matters of fact contained in the history of the New Testament, who ever yet convicted any one of them of falsehood? Or whoever so much as endeavoured it in the age when the books were first written, when the falsehood might have been best proved, had there been any such in them, and the doing hereof would have so much served the designs of those bitter enemies of the Christian cause, who from the first did the utmost they could to suppress it? When relations of matters of fact pass uncontradicted and uncontrolled in the age in which they were transacted, and among those who thought themselves greatly concerned to have them believed false, this must be taken for an undeniable argument of their truth. And this argument the history of the New Testament hath on its side in its fullest strength. For the books were written and published in the very age in which the things related in them were done, yet no one then ever contradicted or convicted of falsehood any one passage in them, though Christianity had from the very beginning the professors of all other religions in most bitter enmity against it, who would have been most ready and glad so to do, could they have found but the least pretence for it. And had any of those relations been false, there were then means enough undeniably to have convicted them of it. For those things which are related of Jesus Christ and his apostles in the history of the New Testament, are not there said to have been done in corners, where none were present to contradict them, but upon the open stage of the world, and many of them in the

sight of thousands; and therefore had they not been really done, or done otherwise than related, there could not have wanted witnesses enough to make proof hereof. And most certainly those who so bitterly opposed Christianity from the first, would have found them out, and made use of their testimonies to the utmost for the overthrowing of the cause they so violently opposed; and had they done so, to be sure we should have had those testimonies in the mouths of all its enemies ever since. For they would have yielded them the strongest and the most prevailing argument they could possibly have urged against it. The false pretences of all other Impostors have been detected by those who lived in their times, and the true history is given of them instead of the false ones which they gave of themselves. And had Jesus Christ and his apostles been like Impostors, and the things related of them in the books of the New Testament false and forged, it is not possible to conceive, especially in the circumstances above mentioned, how they could have escaped the like discovery; but certainly in this case, amidst so many witnesses who could have proved the falsehood, and so many enemies who were eager to detect it, all must have come out, and every false narrative would have been shown to be such, and the true one given in its stead, and we should have heard enough hereof from the adversaries of our holy religion through every age since. And that this was not done when there was such bitter opposition against the Christian religion from the first propagating of it, and it would have been so strong an argument against it, can be assigned to no other cause, but that the things related were so evidently and manifestly true, as not to afford the least pretence for the contradicting of them. But this is not all we have to say in the case. For it hath not only happened that none of those matters of fact have ever been contradicted, or proved false by any of the first enemies

of Christianity, who were best able to have done so, had there been that imposture in them which you alledge; but on the contrary many of them have been allowed true, and attested by them. For two of the most surprising particulars related in the Gospels are confirmed by the testimony of heathen writers, I mean the murder of the innocents by Herod at Bethlehem, and the wonderful eclipse of the sun, which happened at the death of our Saviour, contrary to the nature of a solar eclipse, when the moon was in the full. ^p Macrobius tells us of the former, and ^q Phlegon Trallianus of the latter. And that which is the most important part of all, and bears the greatest testimony to the truth of the whole, was allowed and acknowledged on all hands both by Jews and heathens even in their bitterest opposition against the Christian cause, I mean the account which is given in those sacred books of the miracles of our Saviour. For both of them have yielded to the truth hereof; only the Jews say, that he wrought them by virtue of the Tetragrammaton, or the sacred name Jehovah, stolen by him out of the temple (which the ridiculousness of the fable they relate concerning it, sufficiently confutes) and the heathens, by magic art. And therefore Philostratus and Hierocles finding no other way to overthrow the authority which those miracles gave his religion, confronted against him the history of Apollonius Tyaneus, whom they pretended by the same art of magic to have done as wonderful things, and by this means endeavoured at least to invalidate those miraculous works of his, which they could not deny. And,

2dly. As to the prophecies of our Saviour, the truth of their event in every particular proves the truth of him that pre-

^p Saturnal. lib. 2. c. 4.

^q Vide Chronicon Eusebii, & Origenis contra Celsum librum secundum, & Tract. ad Matthæum 35.

dicted them. For did he not come from God, how could he have this wonderful knowledge, as thus to foretel things to come? Were he not of the secrets of the Almighty, how could he so certainly have foreshown what in aftertimes he would bring to pass? If it were only by guess that he did so, how possibly could all things so exactly fall out in the event, that nothing should in the least happen otherwise than as he predicted; especially since as to most of them, it cannot be so much as said, that there was any place for human sagacity; or the least probable conjecture to help him to any foresight therein? For how improbable was it that the religion which he taught, should, against the bent of the whole world, have made so great and speedy progress therein, as he foretold that it should? or that such instruments as he employed in this work, a company of poor, ignorant, and contemptible fishermen, should ever have been able to have effected it, without the extraordinary providence of God over-ruling the hearts, as well as the power of men? A thing in the ordinary course of human affairs so unlikely to succeed, could never have been brought to pass; nor could our Saviour have any manner of ground from the nature of the thing, so much as to guess at so strange an event, and therefore could never have so punctually foretold it; but that being sent of God to begin this work, he foreknew all that he would do for the perfecting of it. And the same is to be said of what he further predicted of this holy religion as to its continuance among us to the end of the world, of the calling of the Gentiles thereinto, and the rejecting of the Jews; of the great calamities which should attend that people (as accordingly they have through all ages since,) and particularly of that great and terrible calamity which was to fall upon them in the destruction of Jerusalem, and accordingly happened about forty years after, which he so exactly foretold, not only as to the time, (for he saith it should

be before that † generation should pass away) but also as to all other the most considerable circumstances of it, that nothing can be a more exact and perfect comment on the 24th chapter of St. Matthew, and those other passages in the Gospels where this dismal destruction is foretold, than that history of Josephus which gives us an account how it was brought to pass. And that part of the prophecy which relates to the final destruction of the temple, foretelling, ‘that one stone should ‘not be left upon another,’ hath been so exactly verified, that notwithstanding several attempts which have been made for the re-edifying of it, it could never be effected; no, not as far as the laying of one stone upon another in order thereto, even to this day. And when Julian the apostate, out of design to confront this prophecy, and give the lie thereto, employed both the power and the treasure of the Roman empire for the rebuilding of it, heaven itself interposed in an extraordinary manner, to make good what Christ had predicted to be the established purpose of the Almighty, which nothing was able to alter, and by a miraculous fire destroyed the work as fast as it was built, and at length forced the undertakers totally to desist therefrom. For the truth whereof, I will not refer you to the testimony of Socrates Scholasticus, Sozomen, Chrysostom, or any other of the Christian writers who relate it; but to one whom you cannot suspect of serving the interest of the Christian cause herein, he being as much an adversary thereto as any of you; I mean Ammianus Marcellinus, who was an heathen writer, and then served under Julian in his wars in the East, at the same time when this happened. His words concerning it (lib. 23. c. 1.) are as followeth. — *Ambitiosum quondam apud Hierosolimam Templum, quod post multa & interneciva certamina, obsidente Vespasiano posteaque Tito, agre est ex-*

† Matth. c. 24. v. 34.

pugnatum, instaurare sumptibus excogitabat immodicis, negotiumque maturandum Alypio dederat Antiochensi, qui olim Britannias curaverat pro Præfectis. Cum itaque rei idem fortiter instaret Alypius, juvaretque Provinciæ Rector, metuendi globi flammarum prope fundamenta crebris affultibus erumpentes fecere locum, exustis aliquoties operantibus, inaccessum, hacque modo elemento destinatius repellente, cessavit inceptum : i. e. ‘ Julian having a design to ‘ rebuild with extraordinary expence, the temple of Jerusalem, ‘ formerly a very stately structure (which, first Vespasian, and ‘ after Titus, laying siege thereto, was, after many bloody conflicts, at length with difficulty taken and destroyed) committed the care of the business to Alypius the Antiochian, who ‘ formerly had been propræfect of Britany, to be with all speed ‘ expedited by him. But while Alypius was diligently pressing ‘ on the work, and the governor of the province helping him ‘ therein, dreadful balls of fire breaking forth from the foundations of the building, did by their frequent eruptions make ‘ the place unaccessible, the workmen being several times destroyed by the fire, as they went to their labour; and by ‘ this means the element still persisting as of purpose to obstruct ‘ it, the work ceased.’ And it hath never since been again attempted, even to this day, nor is there now left the least remainder of its ruins, to shew so much as the place where this temple once stood; or have those who travel thither, any other mark whereby to find it out, but the Mahometan mosque, erected on the same plat by Omar, the second successor of Mahomet; and which hath now continued for above a thousand years to pollute with the worst of superstitions, that sacred ground on which it was formerly built. Had our Saviour been an Impostor, and foretold all these things without any knowledge of the counsels of him who was to bring them to pass, something certainly must have happened in the event of so many particulars, as would have given the lie to his predic-

tions, and you the opportunity of convicting him thereof by plain matters of fact falling out contrary to them. And although this could not have been done at first, but possibly such prophecies as these might have imposed for a while on the credulity of many; yet we that have passed the time of their completion, could never be deceived thereby; but by the event must plainly know, whether what he foretold be true or false, and from thence have enough to make a judgment also of the truth of him that predicted them. And therefore had our Saviour, like Mahomet, invented his religion to deceive the world; if he intended it should have continued, he must have taken the same course that Mahomet did, and never ventured at any prophecy at all, that he might not be confuted by the event, and so lose his whole design. If you answer, that our Saviour foretold future events after the same manner as the Pharisees said he wrought his miracles; that is, by the prince of the devils: you ascribe that knowledge to the wicked one, which is above his reach to attain unto. The oracles which he gave in the heathen temples, only prove him able to cheat mankind with dubious and dark answers, but never clearly to inform them of the future purposes of the Almighty. And indeed, how can it be imagined that such an accursed one, as he that is cast off at the greatest distance from God (who alone governs all the works of his creation, and by the wisdom of his providence orders every event that attends them) should ever be so privy to his counsels, as to be able to foreknow any thing that he determines concerning them; unless it be where he himself is employed as an executioner of his justice to bring it to pass? But all our Saviour's predictions were clear and full, foretelling things to come, in the same manner as historians relate them when past, without ambiguity in the words, or perplexity in the matter, or the least room left for evasion or deceit in them, and were all ex-

actly fulfilled in their appointed time ; and we have the continuance of his Gospel, the spreading of it through all the nations of the earth, the rejection of the Jews, the calamities of those people in a continued exile, and the total destruction of their temple, standing evidences hereof, even to this day. And how could all this ever have happened so exactly according to his word, but that he was that holy and blessed One, who had the counsels of the Almighty communicated unto him, and was sent by Him on purpose to declare unto us as many of them as were necessary for us to know, in order to the attaining of everlasting life ? And,

3dly, As to the doctrinal part of his religion, what can be more worthy of God, than the notions which he gives us of him, and the worship which he directs us to render unto him ? And what more worthy of us, and perfecting of our nature, than that law for the conduct of our lives which he hath delivered unto us ? And what can be more holy, pure, and perfect, than the precepts thereof ? Here the sublimity and vast extent of the matter give scope large enough for the wisest of men to bewilder and lose themselves in error and mistake ; and yet convince us but of any one such in the whole extent of our religion, and that alone shall be sufficient to prove the imposture you would charge it with, and I will yield you all you would have for the sake thereof. But it is so far herefrom, that I durst make you yourselves the judges, whether it delivers any thing else unto us of the nature and excellencies of God, but what the reason of every man (although barely that alone, through that cloud of ignorance and error which the fall hath over-spread us with, could never clearly make the discovery) must now, when thus discovered, ever justify and admire : whether it prescribes us any one particular relating to his worship, but what is most agreeable to those his excellencies : and whether the precepts and laws therein laid down

unto us for the governing of our lives and conversations, be any other than what do all correspond so exactly with every thing which the rational dictates of our nature direct us to, that they take them all in without omission or defect, and improve them to the utmost without error or mistake in the least circumstance that belongs unto them? If you say, that all this might be attained to by human wisdom and study; I answer, supposing it could, yet looking on our Saviour barely as a man, and his holy apostles without any other assistance than that of their own natural endowments, how possibly could they reach so high? To do this requires that vast compass of knowledge in all the things of nature, law, and morality, as it is not possible to conceive men of their education and low employments in the world, could ever have arrived unto. If you examine what other men have done by human wisdom and study only, you will find those of the most elevated genius and sublimest understanding could never with their utmost industry and search attain unto what you suppose herein, or that the highest knowledge of men could ever reach that perfection in any of the particulars above mentioned, in which the Gospel of Jesus Christ delivers them unto us. For what blunders and absurdities do the wisest of the philosophers lay down concerning the Deity? What errors and follies have they taught and practised concerning his worship? And what mistakes have those who exalted morality to the highest pitch among men, made therein? Plato in his common-wealth allowed the common use of women. Aristotle asserts it to be natural and just for the Greeks to make war upon the barbarians, for no other reason but that they are so; and both he and Tully place revenge among their virtues. And who ever had vaster capacities for human knowledge, or ever went higher by the abilities of natural reason and understanding only in the search thereof, than those men? Yet still-being no more than men, they could

not avoid putting something of the infirmities of man even into that wherein they made appear their highest perfections ; error, mistake, and ignorance being so natural unto all of us, that neither the greatest, the wisest, nor the best among us can be totally free therefrom. And therefore had Christ and his apostles no other help in the doctrines which they taught, but that which is human, they must also in like manner have put that which is human thereinto, and the infirmities, mistakes and errors that attend human nature, would have appeared in all that they delivered unto us. But the doctrines which they taught, and the books in which they delivered them unto us, being so totally free from all such errors and mistakes, as I have already shewn that they are ; this directs us to look higher than man for the Founder of this holy religion, and the original Author of those books in which it is contained ; and necessarily proves, that only he who is infinite in knowledge, and infinite in all other perfections, could thus give us a law so exactly like himself, thoroughly perfect in the whole, and infallibly true in every particular thereof.

SECT. V.

V. Another mark of imposture is, that wherever it is first propagated, it must be done by craft and fraud ; and this is natural to all manner of cheats. For the end of such being to deceive, craft and fraud are the means whereby it is to be effected. In this case a lie must be made to go for a truth, and an appearance for a reality ; and to compass this, a great deal of art must be made use of, both to dress up the cheat, that it may appear to be what it pretends, and also to cast such a mist before the eyes of men, that they may not see it to be otherwise, and that especially where the cheat is an imposture in religion. For whoever comes with a new religion to be proposed to the world, must find all men so far prejudiced and prepos-

seſſed againſt it, as they are affected to the old one they have before profeſſed ; and therefore when men are educated, or any otherwiſe fixed and ſettled in a religion (and all mankind are in ſome or other) they are not apt eaſily to forego it, but it muſt be ſomething more than ordinary that muſt bring them over to another contrary thereto. When the new religion really comes from God (as the Jewiſh religion firſt, and after the Chriſtian did) it brings its credentials with it, the power of miracles to make way for its reception. For when men find the omnipotency of God working with it, they have from thence ſufficient evidence given them from whom it comes, and there is need of no other means to induce them to believe, but that the religion which God doth in ſuch a manner own and atteſt, muſt be from him. But where there is no ſuch power accompanying the new religion to gain credit thereto, the defect hereof muſt be made up by ſomewhat elſe, to draw over the people to its belief ; and this is that which muſt put all Impoſtors upon craft and fraud in order to the compaſſing of their ends. But that Jeſus Chriſt and his apoſtles made uſe of no ſuch craft or fraud to induce men into the belief of that holy religion which they taught, and conſequently could be no ſuch Impoſtors, will be beſt made appear by going over all thoſe ways of craft and fraud which Mahomet ſerved himſelf of : and by ſhewing you that none of them can poſſibly be ſaid to have been practiſed by any of them. For Mahomet being one of the craftieſt cheats that ever ſet up to impoſe a falſe religion on mankind, and the only perſon that ever carried on his wicked deſign with ſucceſs, you may be ſure he left no art or device unpractiſed, which could poſſibly be made uſe of with any advantage for the compaſſing of it. And therefore by proving unto you that none of thoſe methods of craft and fraud, which were made uſe of for the firſt propagating of Mahometiſm, were ever practiſed in the firſt preaching of

Christianity ; I shall sufficiently prove that no craft or fraud at all, which is any way practicable on such occasions, can ever be charged thereupon. For,

1st, Mahomet made use of all manner of insinuation both with rich and poor, for the gaining of their affection, thereby to gain them to his imposture also. But our Saviour Christ and his apostles did quite the contrary, freely convincing all men of their sins, without having regard to any thing else but the faithful discharge of the mission on which they were sent ; which instead of reconciling men to their persons, provoked the world against them, and they sufficiently experienced it from the ill usage which they found therein.

2dly, Mahomet, the easier to draw over the Arabians to his party, indulged them by his law in all those passions and corrupt affections which he found them strongly addicted to, especially those of lust and war, which those barbarians, above all the nations of the earth, were by their natural inclinations most violently carried after ; and therefore he allows them a plurality of wives, and a free use of their female slaves for the satisfying of their lust, and makes it a main part of his religion for them to fight against, plunder, and destroy all that would not be of it. But Jesus Christ and his apostles allowed no such practices, but strictly prohibited all manner of sin, how much soever in reputation among men, even to the forbidding of many things till then allowed and held lawful among those who were called God's own people ; and therefore instead of seeking the favour of men, by indulging them in their lusts and sinful practices, they laid a much stricter restraint upon them than was ever done before.

3dly, Mahomet to please his Arabians, retained in the religion which he taught them, most of those rites and ceremonies which they had been accustomed to under that which he abolished, and also the temple of Mecca, in which they were

chiefly performed. But Jesus Christ, without having any regard to the pleasing of men, abolished both the temple and the law, which the Jews were so bigotted unto, and also the total worshipping of God by sacrifices, without being at all influenced to the contrary, by that extravagant fondness which he knew the whole world had then for them.

4thly, Mahomet, when he found any of his new laws not so well to serve his turn, craftily shifted the scene, and brought them about to his purpose by such alterations as would best suit therewith; and therefore when his making his Kebla towards Jerusalem did not so well please his countrymen, he turned it about again towards Mecca, and ordered all his pilgrimages thither, as in the time of their idolatry. And the like changes he made in many other particulars, according as he found his interest required. And this is that which every Impostor must do. For interest being the end which all such aim at, it is impossible that they can so well lay their designs in order to it, but that emerging changes in the one, will frequently require changes in the other also. But Jesus Christ never made the least alteration in any of the doctrines or precepts which he delivered, but what he first taught, both he and his disciples immutably persisted in, without at all regarding how violently all the interests of the world ran counter to them herein. And what can be a more certain evidence that none such was the bottom which they were built upon?

5thly, Mahomet, under pain of death, forbade all manner of disputes about his religion, and nothing could be a wiser course to prevent its follies and absurdities from being detected and exposed. For they being such as could never stand the trial of a rational examination, they must all have soon been exploded, had every man been allowed the free use of his reason to enquire into them. But Christ and his apostles direct the quite contrary course. For our Saviour bids the Jews search

the Scriptures for the trial of those truths which he taught them, (John 5. v. 39.) And the noble Bereans are commended, that they did so, before they would receive those doctrines of the Christian religion which were preached unto them, Acts 17. v. 11. And St. Paul gives us this general rule, first to prove or try all things, and then to hold fast that only which we find to be good, 1 Thes. 5. v. 21. It is only error and falsehood that desires to shelter itself in the dark, and dares not expose itself to an open view and trial. But truth being always certain of its own stability, makes use of no art to support itself, but dares venture itself abroad on its own foundation only, and boldly offers itself to every man's search; and the more it is sifted and examined into, the more bright and refulgent will it always appear. And since Christianity from the first ever took this course (as it still doth where-ever purely professed) and instead of prohibiting disputes about it, invites all men to search and examine thereinto; this sufficiently argues, how certain the first teachers of it were of its truth, and that no cheat or imposture could ever be intended thereby.

6thly, Mahomet made choice of a people first to propagate his imposture among, who were of all men most fitted to receive it; and that on two accounts: 1. Because of the indifferency which they were grown to as to any religion at all: And, 2. Because of the great ignorance they were in of all manner of learning at that time, when he first vented his forgeries among them, there being then but only one man among all the inhabitants of Mecca that could either write or read. For who are more fit to be imposed on than the ignorant? And who can be more easy to receive a new religion, than those who are not prepossessed with any other to prejudice them against it? The Papists, who, next Mahomet, have the greatest claim to imposture, as to those errors which they teach,

very well understand how such a cause is to be served by both those particulars ; and therefore make it their business as much as they can, to keep their own people in ignorance, and pervert all those they call heretics, to Atheism and infidelity, that so having no religion at all, they may be the better prepared again to receive theirs. And that there are so many Atheists now among us, it is too well known, how much it is owing to their hellish artifice against us. But all was quite contrary as to those whom Christ and his apostles first preached our holy religion unto. Our Saviour did not choose such ignorant times to come among us in, or a people so indifferent in religion, first to manifest himself unto. For the Jews were so far from being weary of that religion which they had so long professed, when he first appeared in his mission among them, that they were then grown into the contrary extreme ; a very extravagant bigotry and superstition concerning it ; so that nothing was more difficult, than to withdraw them from it ; nor could any thing be more offensive to them, than an offer tending thereto ; and so it continues with them, even to this day. And the case was not much otherwise as to all the rest of mankind ; the Gentiles being then grown almost as tenacious of their idolatry, as the Jews of their law ; and learning was in that age among both at the highest pitch that ever it was in the world ; and consequently, men were never less disposed than at that time, to receive a new religion, or ever better able to defend their old. And therefore had Christianity been an imposture, it could never have escaped, in such an age as that, a full detection, or ever have been able to have borne up against it ; such inquisitive heads, and piercing wits, as were then in the world, would have sifted it to the bottom, dived into its deepest secrets, and unravelled and laid open the whole plot, and the prejudiced world would immediately have crushed it to pieces thereupon, so that it should

never more have appeared among mankind. But the truth of our holy religion was such, that it boldly offered itself to this trial; and it seems to have chosen such an age as this, first to come into the world, on purpose to undergo it, that so it might be the better justified thereby. And justified by it, it was; for although it were opposed by the utmost violence of the prejudiced world, they could get no ground of it; though it were thoroughly examined, and diligently searched into by the acutest and subtlest wits of those ages in which it first appeared, they could never discover any fraud, or make out the least flaw therein; but, in spite of both, it triumphed, by its own naked truth only, over all manner of opposition, and by God's mercy continues still so to do, even to this day. That a cheat and a fraud in a thing of this nature should be imposed on men totally ignorant and illiterate, or that such as they, when void of all manner of religion, (as the men of Mecca for the most part were when Mahomet began his imposture among them) should be easy to embrace a new one, is no hard matter to conceive; but that an imposture should be received, and obtain such prevalency over men in so learned and discerning an age, as that wherein Christianity first appeared in the world, or that they who were then so zealously addicted to the religion they had been educated in, whether Jews or Gentiles, should ever have been induced to forsake it for a new one, founded only on a cheat and fraud, is what, morally speaking, we may very well reckon impossible.

7thly, Mahomet offered at no prophecies, that he might not run the hazard of being confuted by the event. But Jesus Christ delivered many clear and plain prophecies, several of which respected that very age in which he lived, and were all in their proper time as plainly verified by the completion of them.

8thly, Mahomet offered at no miracles in public, although

continually called upon and provoked to it by his opposers. For not being able to work any true ones, he would not hazard himself to a discovery by those which were counterfeit. And therefore all those things which he would have go for miracles; that is, his converse with the angel Gabriel, his journey to heaven, and the armies of angels that helped him in his battles, are only related by him as things acted behind the curtain, of which there was no other witness but himself alone, and consequently there could be no witness on the other side ever to contradict them. But Jesus Christ and his apostles having the real power of working miracles, did them openly in the sight of thousands, where all manner of opportunity was given to every spectator to examine into them, and try whether they were true or no; and therefore had there been any cheat or fraud in them, it is not possible to conceive how they should have escaped a discovery. And yet no such discovery could ever be made; which was so convincing an argument of their truth and reality, that even the bitterest enemies of our holy religion from the first yielded in this particular, and both Jews and heathens allowed all those miraculous works which are related of our Saviour and his apostles in the books of the New Testament, to have been really and truly wrought by them, as hath been afore observed. And indeed the evidence was too manifest to be denied, since those very blind that received their sight, those dumb that were enabled to speak, those deaf that were restored to their hearing, those lame that were made to walk, and those dead that were raised again to life, lived many years after to be as standing monuments of the truth of those things, which no one could contradict. And therefore the opposers of the gospel of Jesus Christ have all along rather chosen to invalidate the authority of those miracles, than deny the truth and reality of them.

For they allowing the matters of fact, object that there are

other powers lower than the divine, that are able to bring them to pass; and therefore, although those works were wrought, they do not yet prove either the persons or the doctrines which they taught to come from God, and consequently can give no such evidence, as that which we insist upon them for the truth of that religion which we profess; that others, by magic art, have done the same things; that the Scriptures tell us so of Jannes and Jambres, and Simon Magus; and profane writers of Apollonius Tyaneus, Apuleius, and others; and both Moses and Jesus Christ knew this very well, and therefore forewarned their disciples against it, telling them that false prophets should arise, who should show signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, the very elect; and that they should take care not to hearken to them. And therefore, say they, if signs and wonders can be wrought by false prophets, how can they be evidences for the true; or how can we at all rely upon them for the verifying of any doctrine which they deliver unto us? Or if those miracles which were wrought by them who are sent of God, be only true miracles, and all others false ones, how shall we distinguish the one from the other, so as by them to discern, whether the doctrines be of God or no?

But these difficulties will be easily removed, and the miracles of our Saviour and his apostles, as they are allowed to be truly wrought by them, so also will they as truly prove the doctrines which they taught, to come from God, if you will but consider these following particulars.

1. Miracles are works done which are strange and amazing to us, as being brought to pass out of the ordinary road, and in a manner which we cannot comprehend; and these are of two sorts: 1. Such as exceed only the power of man to effect them; and these we call signs or wonders: And, 2. Such as exceed the power of any created being whatsoever; and these only are properly miracles.

2. Wherever such miracles are wrought, as are of this last sort, God alone must be the author of them; and therefore, wherever such are found, they manifestly prove the power of God co-operating with the persons, at whose word they are done; and with whomsoever it doth thus co-operate, it necessarily demonstrates their mission from him, and puts such an authentic seal to the truth of the doctrines which they teach, as cannot be denied.

3. Wherever a creating power is necessary to the effect produced, or the stated laws of nature are altered, there it is certain none but God himself can be the Author of the work done. For he alone is able to create; and he having created all things according to his infinite wisdom, and given to each their proper essence and operations, he allows none but himself to alter the natures of them, or change that course which he hath put them into.

4. But within the laws and powers of nature, there are abundance of things which exceed the power of man to effect, and therefore seem as miracles to us, which may be produced by other created beings, and these are evil spirits as well as good.

5. To the producing of these effects, evil spirits as well as good are enabled two manner of ways: 1. By their greater knowledge of the powers of nature; And, 2. By the greater agency which they have to apply them to effect. For,

6. There are a multitude of things in nature, that those spirits know the nature of, which we do not. For their abilities of knowing are vastly above ours, as not working by the dull tools of earth and clay, as we do, and their experience exceedingly greater, as having known the works of God from the beginning, and by long observation pryed deep into the secrets of them. If a chymist or a mathematician, by his skill in the powers of nature, can do many things, which, to the

ignorant and unlearned, shall seem as miracles, (as we often find) how much more can those knowing spirits do so, whose knowledge of the powers of nature is vastly more above all ours put together, than the highest and perfectest of ours is above that of the most ignorant that lives among us. But,

7. As those spirits have a vastly greater knowledge of the powers of nature than we can have, so also have they a vastly greater power to apply them to effect. For they are of a much greater agility in their motion, of a much finer substance to penetrate into things, and actuate them into operation; and also of a much stronger agency or power to work than we have, and which, no doubt, they are endowed more or less with, according to the different orders and degrees in which God hath created them; and by both these together, that is, their greater knowledge of natural causes, and their greater power to apply them to effect, can they do a great many things within nature's limits, which exceed all the powers of men to effect, and seem as miraculous and wonderful unto us, whenever brought to pass.

8. Good spirits never work those miracles, but in subserviency to the Divine will, as they are necessary for the effecting of those things which God hath ordained by their ministry to bring to pass. And to them those miracles mentioned in Scripture, which exceed not the power of such created beings, may be referred as the immediate authors of them; it not being likely that God would interpose his immediate power, excepting only in such cases, as where there was need of it. For why should the Lord himself put his hand to that work, which may as well be discharged by the ministry of his servants?

9. Evil spirits having in a great measure the same knowledge of natural causes as the good, and the like power to bring them to effect, can also work the like wonders, and by God

are often permitted so to do, both for the trial of men, and also for other good causes which to him of his infinite wisdom seem fitting; and we have a plain instance of it in the case of Job.

10. Evil spirits have not only this power of working the like wonders, which good spirits do, but also another, which good spirits will never make use of; that is, by juggle, delusion, and deceit to imitate those true and proper miracles, which none but God himself can really effect. And thus, by the delusion of the devil, was a cheat put upon Saul in the raising of Samuel to him from the dead. For really to raise Samuel from the dead, none but God could, and therefore that appearance which Saul saw, was no more than a false appearance, contrived by the devil to put a cheat and delusion upon him. And of this same sort may we reckon the miracles which Jannes and Jambres wrought in imitation of Moses. For to turn a rod into a serpent, and water into blood, or to cause frogs to come up upon the land, in which three particulars they did the same thing by their enchantments, that Moses did by the hand of God, are works, which if really done, require the creating power to bring them to effect, which none but God hath; and therefore in this case the devil acted for them, not by his effecting, but only by his deluding power. And such miracles the Scripture calls *τίατα ψεύδους κατ' ὀρέξειαι τῷ Σατανᾷ*; i. e. 'Lying or false miracles, which are not really wrought, but only made so to appear by the juggle and delusion of Satan.'

11. Those cheats and delusions of the devil, whereby he imitates the true and real miracles of God, which he cannot work, are only in transient effects, like those of jugglers upon a stage, never in such as are lasting and permanent. And

where the effect is totally transient, God's works are often so far above the devil's imitation, that even in these there will be still a multitude of particulars, wherein he can have no power, as much as by juggle or delusion, to do any thing like unto them.

12. Whatsoever signs or wonders are wrought by magicians or false prophets, must be referred to one of these two heads; that is, that they are either the devil's works, or the devil's delusions: and the Scriptures, which tell us of magicians and false prophets working such signs and wonders, do in many places refer them hereto.

13. Those signs or wonders which are really wrought by the devil and his evil spirits, are to be distinguished from those which are wrought by the power of angels or good spirits, by these following marks: 1. That angels or good spirits never work those wonders, but in subserviency to the will of God, for the promoting of truth and righteousness; but the devil and his evil spirits only for the promoting of error and wickedness. 2. Angels or good spirits, never co-operate in the production of those wonders with any prophet or teacher, but such only as, being sent of God, are good and righteous persons; but the devil and his evil spirits only with such as, not being sent of God, are evil like themselves. 3. Angels or good spirits never exert their power to work these wonders, but in things serious and grave, whereby either the good of men, or the honour of God is promoted; but the devil and his evil spirits do it mostly in things mischievous both to God's honour and man's good, or else in such trivial and foolish matters as are beneath God or his holy angels to be concerned in. And by the same marks also may we distinguish God's miracles from the devil's juggles, and those wonderful works which the hand of the Almighty really effecteth, from those false appearances which the devil makes in imitation of them, to put

a cheat and a delusion upon us. Which particulars being premised, the answer to the foregoing objections will be as followeth.

1. We do acknowledge that abundance of very wonderful works may be effected by powers lower than the divine, and that not only by good spirits, but also by evil.

2. That therefore such works alone are never sufficient proof of a divine mission, unless corroborated by such concurring circumstances as prove them not to be from evil spirits, but only from good.

3. That wherever such wonderful works are done at the word of a wicked man, or to a wicked purpose, (*i. e.* either to influence to a wicked practice, or to give credit to some false doctrine) or else in such mean and trivial cases as are beneath the majesty of God or his ministering spirits to be concerned in, there we may be sure that he that doth those works, how much soever he may pretend to a divine mission, is only a false prophet; and that it is not by the power of God or his good spirits, but only by the power of the devil and his wicked spirits, that they are wrought; and against those wonders is it, and the workers of them, that Moses warneth the Jews, and Jesus Christ his disciples, that they should be aware of them.

4. Where they who work those wonders are holy and righteous men, and do not teach any doctrine contrary to the certain dictates of natural religion, or the revelations of God afore given us, and the wonders which they work are in such serious and grave matters as are not unworthy of God or his ministering spirits to be concerned in, there we have no reason to suspect Satan's power in the effecting of them; and therefore such works may, although not of themselves alone, yet with these concurring circumstances, be sufficient proofs of the truth of any doctrine which they give testimony unto.

. For although they cannot be proved to be immediately from God, because producible by inferior beings; yet with these circumstances accompanying them, they must at least appear to be the works of his ministering spirits, who can bear testimony to nothing but what is from God, whose will they are in all things subservient unto.

5. As such works which the devil and his evil spirits can do, are not of self-sufficient proof to a divine mission, so neither are such which he can by juggle or delusion imitate; because men may be deceived by the one as well as the other; and therefore the same concurring circumstances are necessary to these also, and by the same marks are they to be tried, whether they be of God or no.

6. But where the works are such as no created being can either really produce, or by juggle or delusion imitate, there those works do of themselves alone prove a divine mission, and give an authentic seal of undeniable truth to every doctrine thus revealed unto us.

7. Although therefore it should be allowed, that some of the miracles which Christ and his apostles wrought, might be producible by powers lower than the divine; yet since they who did them were most holy and righteous persons, and did not teach any doctrine contrary either to the dictates of natural religion, or the revelations of God afore given unto men, and the miracles themselves were not in such mean and trivial cases as are related of Apollonius Tyaneus, and others like him; with these circumstances they sufficiently appear to be, if not immediately from the hand of God, yet at least from his ministering spirits, and their works; since all done in subserviency to the Divine will, do as thoroughly prove a divine mission, wherever they evidently appear to be theirs, as those of God himself. That Christ and his apostles were most holy and righteous persons, and taught no doctrine which was in

the least contrary to the dictates of natural religion, hath been afore shown; and how far their miracles were from being in mean and trivial matters, the works themselves make evident: and it is as certain, that no doctrine of theirs ever contradicted in the least any divine revelation afore given unto men. For Jesus Christ and his apostles every where allow both the law and the prophets to be from God. Had they taught any thing which would have charged a falsehood on either, they must then indeed have been said to contradict divine revelations afore given, and would thereby have fallen under that character and mark of false prophets which I have above laid down; but they were so far from this, that the law and the prophets were the ground-work which they founded all their doctrines upon. For the law contained in types and shadows, and the prophets in their prophecies and dark sayings, whatever the Gospel hath in substance and reality since clearly delivered unto us; and laid down all that in the first rudiments, which Christ and his apostles afterwards built up into perfection, in that holy religion which they have given unto us. And therefore, although the Gospel hath abolished the law, it was not by contradicting or condemning it, but by perfecting and fulfilling it in that manner as all the prophets foreshowed that it should.

8. But the miracles of Jesus Christ and his apostles, were most of them undeniably such as could not be produced but by the immediate hand of God himself, as necessarily requiring the creating power to effect them; and also of that permanency, as allowed no room for juggle or delusion to take place in them. For what other power but that of the Almighty could raise a man, who had been four days dead, again to life? Or what other hand, but that of the Creator himself, could make him see, who had been without the natural organs of sight from his very birth? Or what but the same power which

first formed man of the dust of the earth, could restore him, in so many instances as our Saviour and his apostles did, to health and perfection, when the very parts and vessels necessary thereto, were thoroughly perished; and in so miraculous a manner, with a word of their mouth, bring back total privations again to their former habits? Or what craft of Satan can reach as much as to an imitation of such wonderful works as these, which left behind them, for many years after, effects of lasting permanency in the persons cured, not only to be monuments of the things done, but also undeniable evidences of the truth and reality of them? It would be too long to go over all the miracles of this nature, which Christ and his holy apostles did for the confirmation of those holy truths which they taught. These already mentioned are sufficient to shew, that some of their miracles at least were such as are above the powers of all created beings either to effect or imitate; and therefore these certainly must be allowed to be from God alone, without possibility of imposture, deceit, or delusion in them; and in that they are so, they must necessarily prove the mission of them, at whose words they were done, to be from him also, and consequently become a witness to the truth of every doctrine delivered by them, as firm, certain, and infallible as the veracity of God himself, which can never err or deceive for ever. And so much of the fifth mark of imposture.

SECT. VI.

VI. No imposture, when entrusted with many conspirators, can be long concealed. For what plot or conspiracy have we ever known or heard of, which hath been thus managed, and hath not had some false brother or other to discover it; especially if there be any great wickedness intended by it, or any great danger attending the execution of it (as mostly is in such designs.) For then if the thing itself doth not work the

conscience into an abhorrence, the fear of the consequence may at least deter from it ; and it seldom fails but one of these two, in all such cases, drives some or other into a discovery ; and in this age of plots we have instances enough hereof. And what plot can be more wicked, than to impose a false religion upon mankind ? And what can be more dangerous than to attempt it ? What hath been already said, sufficiently proves both these particulars ; and therefore, if the first planting of Christianity were such a plot, certainly one of these two, that is, either the wickedness, or the danger, would have wrought some or other into a discovery of it. For they were not a few that were admitted thereinto. 'They were at least ^c five hundred that were in that, which you must call the greatest secret of it ; I mean the resurrection of our Saviour from the dead ; for that is the main article of our holy Christian religion ; the truth of which proves all the rest, and without which all the rest must have fallen to the ground, and our whole Faith become ^u vain. And therefore had but any one of these five hundred, who are asserted to have been the witnesses of it, discovered the thing to have been only a conspiracy of imposture between them, this discovery must have laid open the whole design, and put a total end thereto. And were not the thing certainly true which they attested, it is scarce to be conceived but that some or other of them must have done so. Among the twelve apostles one was found a traitor to his Master ; and how much more then may we expect that there should have been one such among five hundred ? And especially in a case where all ought to have been so ; that is, to discover a plot against the souls of all mankind, and deliver the world from being imposed on thereby. Among so many it scarce happens, but some or other prove false to the best cause ;

^c 1 Cor. 15. 6.

^u 1 Cor. 15. 17.

and how hard is it then to conceive, that in such a number none should be found to betray the worst? And can we call it any other than the worst, if it be such an imposture as you would have it to be? Were Christianity really such, and this doctrine of the resurrection of our Saviour totally the forgery of those who attested it, so many as five hundred could never have all kept the secret; or if they should, out of love to their own invention, or any self-ends which they might have therein, be inclined so to do; yet punishment, pain, and torture, use to extort the most hidden devices, and make the most obstinate offenders, the closest designers, and the most reserved plotters of mischief, to come to a confession. And what punishments, what pains, what tortures did those first witnesses of this main and fundamental article of our faith go through for the sake of that testimony which they did bear thereto? And yet did any one of them ever flinch from it? Did any one of them ever retract what he had attested concerning it? Prove but this, and then you will say something to make out the charge which you lay against it. But they were so far herefrom, that they all persisted in it to the last; and not only so, but were every one of them ready to shed their blood for a witness to the truth of what they asserted, and a great many of them actually did so; and all the terrors, threats, and tortures of their persecutors were not able to deter them therefrom. And what greater evidence then can there be given to any truth in the world, which depends upon matter of fact, than that which Christianity hath from the testimony of those men in so great a number and such a manner bearing witness thereto?

SECT. VII.

VII. The last mark of an imposture is, that it can never be established without force and violence. For if it hath wicked

men for its authors, worldly interest for its end, falsity and error for its doctrines, and receives its rise from the craft and fraud of its first promoters, as I have already shown, the search of the inquisitive will soon find it out, and mankind will not long bear the imposture, unless they be over-ruled by violence, and have all objections against it silenced with the sword at their throats. This was the method which Mahomet took to establish that false religion which he invented. For he prosecuted with war all that would not submit thereto, and made it no less than death for any to gainsay it, or so much as raise the least dispute against any of the doctrines of it. And without his doing this, the reason of all mankind must have appeared against it, and it could never have stood. And the Romanists have learned from him to take the same course, as to those doctrines of imposture which they have superadded to the Christian religion. For they declare all those to be heretics, and prosecute them with sword, fire and faggot, that refuse to receive them; and thus, by the power of their dragoons and their inquisitions, they have established and still kept up those gross errors in their church, which neither reason nor religion can ever support; and the same must be done as to all other falsities imposed on mankind, before they can have any firm footing among them. For it is only force and violence that can cram such things down men's throats, which their reason and their judgment must ever renounce. The unthinking multitude may for a while be carried away by the craft of the Impostor, and by the arts of hypocrisy and delusion be made easy to swallow any forgery that shall be offered unto them; but when the heat of the first zeal is over, and the matter comes to be examined into by reason, and coolly scanned through by the inquisitive, imposture cannot stand the test, but must soon be laid open, blasted, and exploded thereupon. And therefore, unless it be accompanied with force

to suppress this inquiry, and hath power on its side to compel men to acquiesce therein, how much soever it may delude men at first, it can never obtain any lasting establishment among them. And this hath been the case of all the Impostors which have ever yet appeared in the world, without this power to back them; and how great progress soever any of them may have made in the first heat, they have all at length been detected, and exploded, and sunk to nothing, for want of this support on their side to keep them up. For nothing but truth can of itself alone stand the test of ages upon its own bottom only. Falsehood and error are too weak for such a trial, and therefore unless supported by some external strength, and fenced thereby against all assaults of opposers, they must necessarily fall to the ground, and again come to nothing; and where education, or the force of long-received custom, is not strong enough for this, (and neither can in the first propagating of an imposture) there the sword must come in to over-rule all, or nothing of this nature can be established among men. But Jesus Christ and his apostles, instead of making use of any such force to establish the religion which they taught, had all the force and powers of the world in opposition against it; and yet in spite of the world, it at length prevailed over the world by the dint of its own truth only; and after having stood the assault of all manner of persecutions, as well as other oppositions, for three hundred years together, carried the victory over the fiercest of its enemies, and made the greatest of them, even the Roman emperors themselves, to submit thereto; and all this while it had sharpened against it, not only the sword of the superior powers, but also the tongues of the slanderers, and the wits of all the learned of those times. But how much soever it was oppressed by the first of these, blackened by the second, and sifted and searched into by the last, it stood all these trials without losing any

thing thereby, but at last came out of them all, like gold out of the furnace, still of the same weight, fineness, and purity, without receiving from that fire which consumeth all things else, the least waste or diminution thereof. Had it been false, and owed its original only to deceit and imposture, it would have needed all those means of violence for its establishment and support; but since it thus stood, not only with them, but also in spite of them; when all armed on the adversaries side for three centuries together, in bitter opposition against it, what greater argument can we have for the truth thereof? For can you think that falsehood and imposture could ever have held out with such steady and unshaken constancy for so many years, as Christianity thus did? Or that it is possible for any sort of men so long to have borne all this for the sake of a lie? Falsehood can have no foundation for such a constancy, or imposture any reason to engage men thereto. The interest of this world is ever the bottom and foundation of all such forgeries; and therefore, as soon as punishments and persecutions make it to be no man's interest to be for them, they ever fall of themselves, for want of that foundation on which they afore stood. But Christianity having come into the world contrary to all the interests of it, and in its very infancy thus stood the shock of all the powers thereof engaged in persecution against it, as I have mentioned; and not only so, but also prospered and became established in the midst of the hottest assaults thereof, this plainly shows that it had another kind of foundation on which it was built, a foundation of truth and righteousness, and not only so, but a foundation that was laid and fixed in such a manner by the hand of God himself, as never to be shaken. For what truth of itself alone could ever have made its way into the world in such a manner as the Christian religion did, or ever have gained, against all the powers thereof, such a prevalency over it, without some

extraordinary assistance, conducting and helping it therein? The strongest truths we know are crushed by such means of violence as that encountered with, and even first principles themselves have been overpowered by them. And therefore that Christianity should thus enter the world, and thus from its first entry bear up against such long and terrible trials of persecution and oppression as it met with, without the least flinching under them, must be owing to somewhat more than its own bare truth. And what but the hand of God himself backing and strengthening it in the conflict, could be sufficient to give it such a victory therein? For that a few poor fishermen, the disciples of a crucified Master, should, without power, learning, or reputation, or any other of the interests or favours of the world on their side, be able to introduce a new religion into the world directly opposite to all the interests, pleasures and prevailing humours of it, as Christianity then was; and that this religion, in spite of all the powers, cunning, malice, and learning of the world joined together in most fierce opposition, and bitter persecution against it for three hundred years together, should not only bear up, but also at length prevail over the world, and subject the highest powers therein to the obedience of its laws, is an event so strange and wonderful, and morally speaking, so far above the possibility of all ordinary means to bring it to pass, as plainly manifesteth the extraordinary working of God himself therein. And for my part, had the Christian religion no other miracle to bear witness thereto, this alone would be a miracle enough to me, sufficiently to convince me of the truth thereof. At least, since it thus entered into the world, and thus became established in it, it must be allowed to be so far differing from an imposture in that method of violence which that needs for its establishment, as to be totally opposite thereto, and in this particular

(as I hope I have shewn of all the rest) not to have the least mark or character thereof.

And thus far having laid before you all the obvious marks of imposture, and proved that none of them can belong to Christianity, I hope what hath been said will sufficiently infer the conclusion, which I have undertaken to make out unto you, that our holy Christian religion cannot be such an imposture as you would have it to be, but really is that sacred truth of God, which you are all bound to believe.

It is too common with mankind to frame their judgments according to their inclinations, and upon very slight grounds hastily to run away with ideas of things, when they correspond with the prevailing bent of their affections, which, whenever put into a true light before them, must all appear to be false and wrong taken. And this I reckon to be your case. Your inclinations strongly leading you into infidelity, you would have Christianity be an imposture, and therefore have over-easily and hastily been induced on very weak grounds to believe it so to be. And that you may be undeceived in so dangerous and destructive an error, I have endeavoured in the easiest and most familiar manner I could think of, to put this business into a true light before you. 1. By letting you see what an imposture is, in that true picture which I have drawn of it, in the life of him who was really and truly such an Impostor as you would have Jesus Christ to be. And, 2. By examining into the marks and properties which naturally belong to every such imposture, and showing of each of them that they cannot belong to that holy religion which we profess. And I hope, when you have considered all this thoroughly, you will see how much you have been deceived in those opinions which you have so precipitately given up yourselves unto.

You cannot but be sensible how great the stress is which we lay on this matter, and how very ill your case must be, if

we are in the right, and you in the wrong ; and therefore the thing is of sufficient importance to deserve your most serious consideration, and that in such a manner as to make you lay aside all those groundless prejudices and wrong biases which may obstruct an impartial inquiry ; and if you will be pleased, for the sake of your own souls, to do thus much, I am content to leave the success of what I now offer unto you, to God's grace, and your own judgments.

As to the particular reasons which you may allege for your disbelief of our holy Christian religion, whether they be objections drawn against it, either from history, philosophy, or the inconsistencies which you imagine you find in the books of holy writ, in which it is delivered down unto us, it is not my purpose now to enter into any disputes with you about them. That which I at present purpose, is not so much to consider those premises, as the conclusion which you pretend to draw herefrom, that Christianity must therefore be an imposture ; and from the nature of such an imposture, and the nature of our holy Christian religion laid in a true light, and compared together with each other, to evidence unto you the inconsistency of this charge. And if what I have now said can be of any force to let you into a clear sight of this matter, it will be totally needless for me to meddle any further. For all those objections which you pretend to have been the particular reasons of your infidelity, have been already abundantly answered and confuted by others. But the opinion which you have conceived, that Christianity is an imposture, having so far prepossessed your judgment, as to influence it against all things of this nature that can be proposed unto you, it will be in vain to offer any thing farther as to those particulars, till this prejudice be removed ; and were it once removed, what hath already been said in answer to them, will be abundantly sufficient to give you full satisfaction. Although this method

may seem illogical, thus to assault the conclusion without meddling with the premises from which you pretend to have deduced it ; yet it is no other than what you yourselves have necessitated me unto, by taking up the conclusion first, and the premises afterward. Had you indeed first began with those reasons which you offer for your infidelity, and been really, by the conviction of them led into this conclusion, that Christianity is an imposture, it would then have been proper and fitting that I should have begun there too, and no otherwise have endeavoured to overthrow the conclusion, but by first overthrowing the premises from whence you deduced it. But since it is well known that the conclusion hath been of greater force with the most of you, to make you assent to the premises, than the premises to prove the conclusion ; and it is only the fond conceit you have taken up in compliance with ill company, or worse inclinations, that Christianity must be an imposture, that hath made many of those arguments seem so conclusive with you, which are brought to prove it ; this makes it necessary for me to begin my endeavours for your conviction, at that same point where you first began your infidelity, and to attack the conclusion in the first place, before any success can be expected towards the setting you right as to any thing else. For as long as you are wilfully bent, out of a mere fondness for infidelity, to hold Christianity to be an imposture, this will make every argument seem strong to you that is brought to prove it, and every solution insufficient which is given thereto, and render all means for your conviction utterly ineffectual unto you. And therefore this being in truth the first error which hath influenced your mind to all the rest, this must be first removed ; and if what I have said can be of any force in order thereto, by letting you see how much you have been mistaken herein, this I hope will remove that prejudice which hath hindered you from seeing the

strength of those arguments which have been already offered for your conviction, as to all other particulars of that infidelity which you have given up yourselves unto, and make you clearly discern how much you have been mistaken in them also, and thereby become the means of delivering your souls from that terrible danger which you expose them unto ; the accomplishing of which is the whole end, scope, and design of this discourse which I now offer unto you.

But here perchance it may be asked, and I think it reasonable to give you satisfaction herein, why I have set forth unto you an imposture by so foul a picture as that of Mahomet ? And to this I have these two answers to return. 1. Because I have none other to do it by, Mahomet being the only Impostor who could ever prevail so far as to establish his imposture, and make it a standing religion in the world ; and had it not gone so far, it could not have been such an imposture as you would have Christianity to be, or at all fit to be compared with it in the argument now before us. And, *2dly*, How foul soever the picture of Mahomet may be, we have no reason, from the nature of the thing, ever to imagine that any other Impostor can have a fairer, till you bring us an instance thereof. And these two I hope may be sufficient to clear me from acting any way unfairly in this matter, as if I had made choice of the life of so wicked a person as Mahomet, therein to picture out an imposture unto you, only to make it appear in the foulest dress it is capable of, the better to advantage thereby that cause which I handle.

But to the first of these answers, I foresee this objection will be made : If Mahomet be the only Impostor that ever established his imposture in the world, how then hath it come to pass, that there have been so many false religions among mankind ? To which I reply, not by imposture, such as Mahomet's was, and such as Christianity must be, if it be such an impos-

ture as your charge against it supposeth, but by corruptions insensibly growing on from that religion which was first true. The first religion which God gave unto man, was that natural religion which he imprinted on his very nature, when he first created him; and as much of that as escaped that ruin with which the fall overwhelmed him, was that whereby God was worshipped and served by him afterwards; only with this addition, that whereas man in his innocency addressed himself to God immediately of himself alone, and in his own name, he could never after his fall from it, have any more access unto him, but through a Mediator; God's infinite purity and greatness on the one hand, and man's infinite guilt and vileness on the other, after that fatal miscarriage of our first parents, did put them at so vast a distance the one from the other, that in the nature of the thing there could be no other way thenceforth of maintaining any communion between them; and therefore had not this way been found out again to bring man to God, he must totally have been estranged from him for ever after. But God of his infinite mercy having resolved not thus to cast us off, he appointed us a Mediator as soon as we had fallen, and promised to send him in his appointed time to take our nature upon him, and therein pay down that price of redemption for us, by virtue whereof his mediation should always be sufficient to obtain mercy, and pardon, and acceptance for us. And this is that which was meant by God's promising immediately after the fall, that 'the seed of the woman should break the serpent's head;' which being farther explained by after-revelations, the whole religion of God's people after that, was to offer up their worship unto him through hope in this Mediator; and all the idolatry, polytheism, and other false worships, which after arose in the heathen world, were all by such corrupt deviations therefrom, as the superstitions of men, the unfaithful way of

transmitting divine revelations by tradition only, and the decay of all divine knowledge occasioned thereby, in process of time introduced among them. For when mankind began to increase after the flood, and they were taught from Noah their forefather thus to worship God through hope in a Mediator, as the knowledge of those divine truths which he delivered to them began to decay, and superstition to increase among them, they began to determine themselves to such mediators as their own imaginations led them to fancy, and some chose angels, and others men deceased, for this office, and in process of time erected temples and images unto them, and honoured them with divine worship, in order to render them the more helpful and beneficent unto them. The Babylonians or Chaldeans, who were the first formed state after the flood, looked on angels to have been the mediators God had appointed, through whom they were to come unto him; and for this reason directed their worship to the sun, and moon, and the rest of the planets, which they fancied to be the habitations * where those angels dwelt; and also erected images unto them, into which they reckoned their influence and divine power did descend and remain with them, when those luminaries themselves were set and disappeared in their horizon; so that their notion was to make their addressees through the images to the planets, and through the planets to the angels that dwelt in them, and through the angels to God himself, whom they acknowledged

* Hence Aristotle seems to have had his doctrine of the Intelligences moving the Spheres; and Plato that which he taught of the stars being living bodies. For it was the opinion of the ancient Chaldeans, as it is of the Sabii now, who are descended from them, that there was in each star an angel in the same manner as our souls are in our bodies, and that the stars are animated by these angels, and hence have all their motion, and also that influence which they are supposed to have over this world, and for this reason was it that they worshipped them.

to be the One Supreme Being, who was the Creator and Governor of all things. And this was the first idolatrous religion which was established in the world, and long prevailed over a great part of it, and is still preserved in the East among the sect of the Sabians even to this day. But the Persians not liking the worship of the planets by images, would endure no other symbol to represent those glorious luminaries by, but fire only, of which they reckoned them to be constituted; and therefore wherever they prevailed, they destroyed all images out of the temples, and placed fire in their stead; and from hence the *Magi* or the *worshippers of fire* had their original. But from their having one symbol, they speedily came to the asserting but of one deity represented by it, which they would have to be light, and that of the mixture of this and darkness, all things in this world were compounded; that light was the cause or principle of all good, and darkness the cause or principle of all evil; and therefore under the symbol of fire they worshipped light as their god, but detested darkness in the same manner as we do the devil. And from hence Manes the heretic had his two principles, which he would have introduced into the Christian religion. But above both these they acknowledged a Supreme God, in respect of whom their god light was but an inferior deity, or a god mediator, by whom they were to have access unto him. And this religion obtained through all Persia, and other parts on the east of it, and doth there remain even unto this day among the Persians in India, and the inhabitants of the province of Kerman, on the southern coast of Persia. But the practice of the Babylonians or Chaldeans in worshipping their gods mediators by images, obtained in all the western parts of the world. For they holding, that they were to have access to God through angels as their mediators, and to the angels through the planets, and to the planets through the images which they erected

to them, did give to those images the names of the planets, and under those names paid divine worship unto them ; which idolatry passing from Babylon or Chaldea into Arabia, and from thence to the Egyptians and Phœnicians, was by them carried into Greece, and from thence spread itself into all parts on this Western side of the world, as that of the Magi did on the Eastern. For the chief gods of the Greeks, as well as the names by which they were called, came from the Egyptians and Phœnicians, and were no more than the images by which the Babylonians worshipped the sun, moon, and other planets, with the names of those planets given unto them. Afterward indeed they added to their number other deities also, which were originally either some of the fixed stars, or else the souls of men departed, as of Bel or Belus among the Babylonians, Abraham and Ismael among the Arabians, Orus and Osiris among the Egyptians, Æsculapius and Hercules among the Greeks, and Romulus or Quirinus among the Romans. For it early began a custom among all the worshippers of images, as well Greeks as barbarians, to deify men departed ; reckoning those who lived justly and righteously, or had made themselves eminent by any great and worthy actions in this life, to have those habitations allotted them in the heavens above, where they were in a capacity to be mediators to God for them ; and therefore they offered divine worship to them as such. And this was it that gave occasion to so many apotheoses or deifications among them, and so vastly encreased the number of their gods in all the idolatrous parts of the world, and also the various methods of superstition, whereby they paid their worship unto them. Yet they all still held to their notion of One Supreme God, and reckoned all the others to be no more than gods mediators under him. And this One God, whom they held to be made of none, and to be the maker or father of all things else that are, was among the

Chaldeans of old (as still among the Sabians, who are the remainder of them) called *Deus Deorum*, and among the Arabs, *Allah Taal*, i. e. *the High or Supreme God*; and agreeable hereto, among the Greeks, was there also their *πατὴρ ἀνδρῶν τε θεῶν τε*, *One Supreme God, who was the Father both of gods and men*. And thus far in answer to your question, have I given you an account how all the false religions in the heathen world had their original; and herein I have been the longer, for the sake of two reflections which are obvious for you to make hereon.

1st, That the notion of a Mediator between God and man, was that which did run through all the religions that ever were in the world, to the coming of Jesus Christ, and was the fundamental principle which prevailed in every one of them, as to all the worship which was practised in them; which could no otherwise become so universal among mankind, but by a tradition as universally delivered unto them. And what can better account both for this tradition, and also the universality of it, than what is delivered unto us in Scripture, of our being descended from one common parent, who on his fall from the favour of God, having had this promise of a Mediator made unto him, through whom we might be again reconciled unto him, transmitted it to all his posterity.

2^{dly}, That the mistakes and errors about the worship of God, and the service we owe unto him, which men are apt to run into, when left to the conduct of their own light only, are monstrous and endless, and therefore evidently demonstrate the necessity of divine revelations. For if God doth expect from us an account of our actions, it is necessary he should give us a law for the rule of them; and if the law of our reason alone be insufficient for this (as from the continual errors and endless absurdities which mankind, when left to themselves, have ever hitherto run into, it doth evidently ap-

pear that it is :) This demonstrably proves the necessity of another to supply its defect, and that in our case we must have a revealed religion as well as a natural, or else we can have no certain knowledge of the will of God, or any of those duties of worship and service which we are to perform towards him. And if this proves the necessity of such a revealed religion (as I think it undeniably must, to every one that believes God will account with us for what we do ;) all that I have farther to offer, is, that you would thoroughly examine and consider that holy Christian religion which we profess, and compare it with all the other religions that are in the world ; and if it does not appear vastly above them all, the worthiest of God for him to give unto us, and the worthiest of us to observe, and that not only in respect of the honour given to him, but also of the improvement and perfection brought to our own nature thereby, I will be content that you shall then persist to believe it an imposture, and, as such, reject it for ever.

HUMPHREY PRIDEAUX.

AN
ACCOUNT
OF THE
AUTHORS
QUOTED IN THIS BOOK.

ARABIC AUTHORS.

ABUL FARAGHIUS, a physician of Malatia in Lesser Armenia, of the Christian religion, and of the sect of the Jacobites. He is an author of eminent note in the East, as well among Mahometans as Christians. His History of the Dynasties is from the creation of the world to the year of our Lord 1284. It was published at Oxford with a Latin version by Dr. Pocock, A. D. 1663. He flourished about the time where his history ends. His name at length is Gregorius Ebn Hacim Abul Faraghi.

Abul Feda, an author of great repute in the East for two books which he wrote: the first, a general Geography of the world, after the method of Ptolemy; and the other, a general History, which he calls the Epitome of the History of Nations. He was born A. D. 1273. He finished his Geography, A. D. 1321: twenty years after that he was advanced to the principality of Hamah in Syria, from whence he is commonly called Shahab Hamah, *i. e.* prince of Hamah, where after having reigned three years, two months, and thirteen

days, he died, A. D. 1345. being seventy-two years old. He was by nation a Turk, of the noble family of the Jobidæ, of which was Saladin the famous Sultan of Egypt. His name at length is Ismael Ebn Ali Al Melec al Moaiyad Amaddodin Abul Fedâ. Ecchelenſis quotes him by the name of Ismael Shiahinſhiah.

Abunazar, a Legendary writer of the Mahometans, much quoted by Hottinger.

Agar, a book of great authority among the Mahometans, faith Guadagnol, (page 165.) wherein an account is given of the life and death of Mahomet. Joannes Andreas makes great use of it under the name of Azaer, as doth Bellonius in the third book of his Observations under the name of Aſaer. Guadagnol who had a copy of the book, calls it the book Agar, and takes most of what he objects against the life and actions of Mahomet out of it.

Ahmed Ebn Edris, an author that writes in the defence of the Mahometan religion against the Christians and the Jews.

Ahmed Ebn Yuſeph, an historian who flourished A. D. 1599. for then he finished his history.

Ahmed Ebn Zin Alabedin, a nobleman of Hiſpahan in Perſia, of this laſt age, who hath wrote the ſharpeſt and acuteſt book againſt the Chriſtian religion, in defence of the Mahometan, of any they have among them on this argument. It was published on this occaſion. Ecbar, the Great Mogul, great grandfather to Aurang Zeb, who at preſent reigneth in India, for ſome reaſons of ſtate, making ſhow of encouraging the Chriſtian religion, did in the year 1595, write to Matthias de Albuquerque, then viceroy of the Portugueſe in India, for ſome prieſts to be ſent to him to his court at Agra. The perſons pitched upon for this miſſion, were Jeronimo Xavier, then rector of the college of the Jeſuits at Goa, and Emanuel Pigneiro, and Benediſt de Gois, two others of that ſociety.

On their coming to Agra, they were very kindly received by the Mogul, and had a church there built for them at his charges, and many privileges and immunities granted unto them, which on the death of Ecbar (which happened A. D. 1604.) were all confirmed to them by his successor Jehan Guire. At the command of this Ecbar, Xaverius wrote two books in Persian (which is the language of that court;) the first, the History of Jesus Christ, collected for the most part out of the Legends of the Church of Rome, which he intended to be instead of the Gospel among them; and the other called, A Looking-Glass, shewing the Truth, which is a defence of the doctrines of that gospel against the Mahometans. What the former is, those who have the curiosity to see what kind of gospel the Jesuits preach in the East, may satisfy themselves, for the book is translated into Latin by De Dieu, and was published by him with the original, A. D. 1639. This gospel of the Jesuits was first presented to Ecbar by Xaverius at Agra, A. D. 1602. But the other book was not published till a year or two after. When it first came abroad, it unluckily fell into the hands of this learned Persian gentleman, who immediately wrote an answer to it, which he calls, The Brusher of the Looking-Glass, wherein he makes terrible work with the Jesuit, through the advantages which he gave him by teaching the idolatry and other superstitions and errors of the church of Rome, for the doctrines of Jesus Christ. When this book came abroad, it so alarmed the college de propaganda fide at Rome, that they immediately ordered it to be answered. The first who was appointed for this work was Bonaventura Malvasia, a Franciscan friar of Bononia, who published his *Dilucidatio Speculi verum monstrantis*, in answer to this Brusher, A. D. 1628. But this, I suppose, not being judged so sufficient by the college, they appointed Philip Guadagnol, another Franciscan friar, to

write a second answer thereto. And on this occasion he composed his book stiled, *Apologia pro Christiana Religione*, which was published at Rome first in Latin, A. D. 1631, and after in Arabic, 1637. For this, I suppose, meeting with better approbation from the college, they ordered it to be translated into that language; and it being accordingly done by the same author, they sent it into the East to be dispersed among the Mahometans, for the defence of the Jesuits Looking-Glass against this rude Brusher of it. But his performance doth by no means answer the design, abundance of his arguments being drawn from the authorities of popes and councils, which will never convince an infidel of the truth of the Christian religion, how much noise soever they may make with them among those of their own communion.

Al Bochari, an eminent writer of the traditionary doctrines of the Mahometan religion. He is reckoned by Johannes Andreas, c. 3. and Bellonius, lib. 3. c. 4. to be one of the six doctors, who, by the appointment of one of the Califs, meeting at Damascus, first made an authentic collection of all those traditions which make up their Sonnah. His book contains the pandects of all that relates either to their law or their religion, digested under their several titles in thirty books, and is the ancientest and most authentic which they have of this matter, and, next the Alcoran, of the greatest authority among them. He was born at Bochara in Cowarasmia, A. D. 809. and died A. D. 869.

Al Coran, *i. e.* The Book to be read, or the Legend, it is the Bible of the Mahometans. The name is borrowed from the Hebrew Kara or Mikra (words of the same root as well as signification, with the Arabic Al Coran) by which the Jews called the Old Testament, or any part of it; and so any part of the Mahometan Bible is called Alcoran. The whole together they call Al Moshap, *i. e.* The Book, which also in respect

of the chapters, into which it is divided, they call Al Furkan, from the Arabic word Faraka, from which the Hebrew Pharak signifies to divide or distinguish; but others will have that book to be so called in respect of the matter or doctrine therein contained; because, say they, it distinguisheth good from evil.

It hath been lately published in Arabic, with a large preface before it in Latin, by Abraham Hinckleman, at Hamburg, A. D. 1694. Had he added a Latin version, he would have made it much more useful. For that which hath been published by Bibliander for a Latin version of the Alcoran, is only an absurd epitome of it, composed by Robertus Retinensis, near 600 years ago, whereby the sense of the original is so ill represented, that no one can by the one scarce any where understand what is truly meant by the other. In the year 1647, Andrew du Rycer, who had been agent for the French merchants at Alexandria, published a translation of it in French, from which it had been put into English by Alexander Rossé. Hottinger and Plempius much commend this translation, and, indeed, it must be said that it is done as well as can be expected from one who was only a merchant.

Al Fragani, an astronomer of Fragana in Persia, from whence his name Al Fragani, *i. e.* Fraganensis, by which he is commonly called. His name at length is Mohammed Ebn Katir Al Fragani. He wrote a book called, The Elements of Astronomy, which hath been several times published in Europe, at Neurenburg, A. D. 1537, at Paris, A. D. 1546, at Frankfort, cum Notis Christmanni, A. D. 1590, in Latin; and afterwards by Golius in Arabic and Latin at Leyden, A. D. 1669, with large notes, of great use for the understanding of the geography of the East. He flourished while Al Mamon was Calif, who died A. D. 833.

Al Gazali, a famous philosopher of Tusa in Persia. He wrote many books, not only in philosophy, but also in defence

of the Mahometan religion against Christians, Jews, Pagans, and all others that differ therefrom, whereof one is of more especial note, entitled, *The Destruction of Philosophers*, which he wrote against Al Farabius, and Avicenna, and some others of the Arab philosophers; who, to solve the monstrous absurdities of the Mahometan religion, were for turning many things into figure and allegory, which were commonly understood in the literal sense. Those he violently opposeth on this account, accusing them of heresy and infidelity, as corrupters of the faith, and subverters of religion, whereon he had the name of Hoghatol Eslam Zainoddin, *i. e.* The Demonstration of Mahometism, and the Honour of Religion. He was born A. D. 1058, and died A. D. 1112. His name at length is Abu Hammed Ebn Mohammed Al Gazali Al Tufi.

Al Jannabi, an historian born at Jannaba, a city in Persia, not far from Shiras. His history comes down to the year of our Lord 1588, and therein he tells us that he went in pilgrimage to Mecca, and from thence to Medina, to pay his devotions at the tomb of the Impostor, in that year of the Hegira which answers to the year of our Lord 1556. His name at length is Abu Mohammed Mustapha Ebnol Saiyed Hasan Al Jannabi.

Al Kamus, *i. e.* The Ocean, a famous Arabic dictionary so called, because of the ocean of words contained in it. It was written by Mohammed Ebn Jaacub Ebn Mohammed Al Shirazi Al Firauzabadi. He was a person of great esteem among the princes of his time, for his eminent learning and worth, particularly with Ismael Ebn Abbas, king of Yaman, Bajazet king of the Turks, and Tamerlane the Tartar, from the last of which he received a gift of five thousand pieces of gold at one time. He was born A. D. 1328, being a Persian by birth, but he lived most at Sanaa in Yaman. He finished his dic-

tionary at Mecca, and dedicated it to Ismael Ebn Abbas, under whose patronage he had long lived, and afterwards died at Zibit in Arabia, A. D. 1414, being near ninety years old.

Al Kodai, an historian. He wrote his history about the year of our Lord 1045, and died A. D. 1062. His name at length is Abu Abdolla Mohammed Ebn Salamah Ebn Jaafar Al Kodai.

Al Mafudi, an historian. He wrote a history called the Golden Meadows, but in what time he lived I do not find. His name at length is Ali Ebn Hofain Al Mafudi. He wrote also another book, wherein he makes it his business to discover and expose the fraud which the Christians of Jerusalem are guilty of, about lighting candles at the sepulchre of our Saviour on Easter-Eve. For then three lamps being placed within the chapel of the sepulchre, when the hymn of the resurrection is sung at the evening service, they contrive that these three lamps be all lighted, which they will have believed to be by fire from heaven,^a and then a multitude of Christians of all nations are present with candles to light them at this holy fire, which hath been a fraudulent practice kept up among them for many hundred years. And the Emperor Cantacuzenus was so far imposed on by this cheat, that in his third Apology for the Christian religion against the Mahometans, he makes mention of it, and urgeth it against those infidels, as a miracle, which being annually performed in their sight, ought to convince them of the truth of the Christian religion, and convert them thereto. But the imposture hath all along been too well known to the Mahometans to be of any such effect with them. For the patriarch of Jerusalem always compounds with the Mahometan governor to permit

^a Vide W. Malmshuriensem de Gestis Regum Anglorum, lib. A. c. 2. f. 79, & f. 83.

him to practice this trick for the sake of the gain which it brings to his church, and annually allows him his share in it. And therefore, instead of being of any effect to convert them, it becomes a matter of continual scandal among them against the Christian religion. And not only this author, but Ahmed Ebn Edris, and most others of the Mahometans, that write against the Christian religion, object it as a reproach thereto (as in truth it is) and urge it with the same earnestness against the Christian religion, that Cantacuzenus doth for it. Al Manfor Hakem Beamrilla, Calif of Egypt, was so offended at it, that A. D. 1007, he ordered the church of the resurrection at Jerusalem, wherein this chapel of the sepulchre stands, to be for this very reason pulled down and razed to the ground, that he might thereby put an end to so infamous a cheat. But the emperor of Constantinople having by the release of five thousand Mahometan captives, obtained leave to have it rebuilt again, the imposture hath still gone on at the same rate, and it is there, to the great sport of the Mahometans (who come in multitudes every year to see this farce) acted over in their sight in the same manner as it is above related even unto this day. Thevenot, who was once present at it, gives us a large account of this whole foolery in the first part of his Travels, book 2. chap. 43.

Al Mostrataf, the name of a book, written by an unknown author.

Al Motarrezî, the author of the book called Mogreb, he was born A. D. 1143, and died A. D. 1213. His name at length is Nasir Ebn Abil Macarem Abal Phatah Al Motarrezî. He was of the sect of the Motazali, and seems by his last name, Al Motarrezî, (by which he is usually called) to have been by trade a tailor, that being the signification of the word in Arabic.

Affamael, a book much quoted by Johannes Andreas, and also by Guadagnol.

Bidawi, a famous commentator on the Alcoran. He died A. D. 1293. His name at length is Nasicroddin Abdollah Ebn Omar Al Bidawi. His commentary is written for the most part out of Zamachshari.

Kazwini, an Arabic author, so called from the city Kafwin. His name at length is Zacharias Ebn Mohammed Ebn Mahmud Al Kafwini. In what age he lived I cannot find.

Dialogus Mahometis cum Abdollah Ebn Salem, a book wrote in Arabic, containing a great many of the fooleries of the Mahometan religion, under the form of a dialogue between Mahomet and this Jew, who was his chief helper in forging the imposture. It was translated into Latin by Hermannus Dalmata; and that version of it is published at the end of the Latin Alcoran set forth by Bibliander.

Disputatio Christiani contra Saracenum de Lege Mahometis. It was written in Arabic by a Christian, who was an officer in the court of a king of the Saracens, to a Mahometan friend of his, who was an officer with him in the same court, and contains a Confutation of the Mahometan religion. Peter, the famous abbot of Cluny in Burgundy, who flourished A. D. 1130, caused it to be translated into Latin by Peter of Toledo; an epitome of which is printed with the Latin Alcoran by Bibliander, taken out of the 24th book of the Speculum Historiale of Vincentius Bellovacensis.

Elmacinus, an historian of the Christian religion. His history is from the creation of the world to the year of our Lord 1118. The latter part of it, which is from the beginning of Mahometism, was published by Erpenius, under the title of Historia Saracenica, A. D. 1625. He was son to Yafer Al Amid, who was secretary of the council of war under the Sultans of Egypt, of the family of the Jobidæ, for 45 years together, and in the year of our Lord 1238, (in which his father died) succeeded him in his place. His name at length is

Georgius Ebn Amid ; and for his eminent learning he was also stiled Al Shaich Al Raais Al Macin, *i. e.* The prime Doctor, solidly learned. The last of which titles, Almacin, was that whereby Erpenius (who pronounceth it Elmacin) chose to call him ; but by others he is generally quoted by the name Ebn Amid.

Ebnol Athir, a Mahometan author, who was born A. D. 1149, and died A. D. 1209. His name at length is Abuffaadat Al Moharac Ebn Mohammed Al Shaibani Ebnol Athir Al Jazari Magdoddin.

Ali Ebnol Athir, an historian, brother to the former Ebnol Athir. His name at length is Abul Hafan Ali Ebn Mohammed Al Shaibani Ebnol Athir Al Jazari Ezzoddin. He was born A. D. 1160, and died A. D. 1232. His history, which he calls Camel, is from the beginning of the world, to the year of our Lord 1230.

Ebnol Kaffai, author of the book called Taarifat, which is an explication of the various terms used in Arabic by philosophers, lawyers, divines, and other sorts of learned professions among them.

Ebn Phares, a Mahometan author, who died A. D. 1000.

Euty chius, a Christian author of the sect of the Melchites, his name in Arabic is Said Ebn Batrick. He was born at Cair in Egypt, A. D. 876, and became very eminent in the knowledge of physic, which he practised with great reputation, being reckoned by the Mahometans themselves to have been one of the eminentest physicians of his time. But towards the latter part of his life giving himself more to the study of divinity, he was A. D. 933, chosen patriarch of Alexandria for his sect, (for there was another patriarch of that place for the Jacobites at the same time) and then he first took the name of Euty chius. But he happened not to be so acceptable to his people ; for there were continual jars between them until his death,

which happened seven years after, A. D. 940. His Annals of the Church of Alexandria were published at Oxford in Arabic and Latin by Dr. Pocock, A. D. 1656, at the charge of Mr. Selden, and this is the meaning of these words in the title-page, [*Johanne Seldeno Chorago*] for he who was the Choragus in the play, always was at the charges of exhibiting the scenes. And therefore Mr. Selden having borne the expences of this chargeable edition, the most worthy and learned author of that version acknowledged it by those words in the title-page, which several having mistaken to the robbing him of the honour of his work, as if Mr. Selden had begun the translation and Dr. Pocock finished it, I cannot but do this justice to that worthy person, now with God, to clear this matter. For he needed no partner in any of his works. The translation was totally his, and only the charges of printing the book Mr. Selden's. Mr. Selden did indeed publish a leaf or two of that author, which he thought would serve his purpose to express his spite against the bishops of the church of England, in revenge of the censure which was inflicted on him in the high commission court for his History of Tythes; but he made those slips in that version, that Dr. Pocock was not at all eased of his labour, by having that little part of it translated to his hands.

Liber de Generatione & Nutritura Mahometis, a most frivolous and silly tract, wrote originally in Arabic; and being translated into Latin by Hermannus Dalmata, is published with the Latin Alcoran by Bibliander.

Geographia Nubiensis, so the book is called by Sionita and Hefronita, who published it in Latin with a Geographical Appendix annexed thereto, A. D. 1619. But this book is only an epitome of a much larger and much better book written by Sharif Al. Adrisi, at the command of Roger, the second of that name, king of Sicily, for the explaining of a ter-

reftrial globe, which that king had caused to be made of a very large size, all of silver. He finished this work A. D. 1153, and entitled it *Ketab Roger, i. e. 'the Book of Roger,'* from the name of him who employed him to compose it. The author was of the race of Mahomet, and therefore is called Sharif, which word signifieth one of a noble race, especially that of Mahomet, and was descended from the noble family of the Adrisidæ, who reigned in some parts of Africa, and therefore he is called Al Adrifi, that is, of the family of Adris. His name at length is Abu Abdollah Mohammed Ebn Mohammed Ebn Adris Amir Olmuminin. There was a very fair copy of this book among Dr. Pocock's Arabic manuscripts.

Georgius Monachus, abbot of the monastery of St. Simeon. He wrote a tract in defence of the Christian religion against the Mahometans, which is a disputation he had with three Mahometans, of whom the chief spokesman was Abfulama Ebn Saar of Mosul.

Jauhari, the author of a famous Arabic dictionary, called *Al Sahah*: his name at length is Abu Nafer Ismael Ebn Hammad Al Jauhari. He was by nation a Turk. He died A. D. 1007. This is reckoned the best dictionary of the Arabic language next *Kamus*. Golius makes his Arabic Lexicon mostly out of it:

Jalalani, *i. e. 'the Two Jalals.'* They were two of the same name, who wrote a short commentary upon the Alcoran, the first began it, and the second finished it. The first was called Jabal Oddin Mohammed Ebn Ahmed Al Mahalli; and the second Jalal Oddin Abdorrahman Al Ofynti. This latter, on the death of the former, finished the book, A. D. 1466, and was also author of a history called *Mezhar*.

Shahresthani, a scholastical writer of the Mahometan reli-

gion. He was born at Shahrestan, A. D. 1074, and died A. D. 1154.

Safioddin, the author of a certain geographical dictionary in the Arabic tongue.

Zamacshari, the author of a book called, *Al Chesnaf*, which is a large commentary upon the Alcoran, and that which is of the best esteem among the Mahometans of any of its kind. His name at length is Abul Casem Mohammed Ebn Omar Ebn Mohammed Al Chowarasmī Al Zamachshari. He was born at Zamachshar, a town of Chowarasmia, A. D. 1074, and died A. D. 1143.

HEBREW AND CHALDEE AUTHORS.

CHALDEE Paraphrase, an interpretation of the Old Testament in the Chaldee language. That of Onkelos on the Pentateuch, and that of Jonathan on the prophets, are ancient, being written, according to the account which the Jews give of them, before the time of our Saviour. But those which are on the other parts of scripture, as also that which bears the name of Jonathan on the Law, were written by some later Jews. The author of the Chaldee Paraphrase on Job, the Psalms and Proverbs, was Rabbi Joseph Cæcus.

Sepher Cozri, a book written by way of dialogue between a Jew and the king of the Cozars, from whence it hath its name *Sepher Cozri* or *Cozari*, *i. e.* ‘the Book of the Cozar.’ The author of it was Rabbi Judah Levita, a Spanish Jew, who wrote the book originally in Arabic about the year of our Lord 1140, and from thence it was translated into Hebrew by Rabbi Judah Ebn Tibbon, in which translation it was published by Buxtorf, with a Latin version, A. D. 1660.

Rabbi David Kimchi, a famous Jewish commentator on the

Old Testament. He was by birth a Spaniard, son to Rabbi Joseph Kimchi, and brother to Rabbi Moses Kimchi, both men of eminent learning among the Jews ; but he himself far exceeded them both, being the best grammarian in the Hebrew language which they ever had, as is abundantly made appear not only in his commentary on the Old Testament (which gives the greatest light into the literal sense of the Hebrew text of any extant of this kind) but also in a grammar and dictionary which he hath wrote of the Hebrew language, both by many degrees the best of their kind : the first of these he calls *Miclol*, and the other *Sepher Shorashim*, *i. e.* ‘ the Book of Roots.’ Buxtorf made his *Thesaurus Lingux Hebrææ* out of the former, and his *Lexicon Lingux Hebrææ* out of the latter. He flourished about the year of our Lord 1270.

Maimonides, a famous Jewish writer ; his book, *Yad Hachazakah*, is a digest of the Jewish law according to the Talmudists. His book *Moreh Nevochim* contains an explication of words, phrases, metaphors, parables, allegories, and other difficulties which occur in the Old Testament. It was first wrote in Arabic, and after translated into Hebrew by Rabbi Samuel Ebn Judah Ebn Tibbon, from which translation it was published in Latin by Buxtorf, A. D. 1629. He was born at Corduba in Spain, A. D. 1131, but lived mostly in Egypt, from whence he is commonly called Rabbi Moses *Ægyptius*, where he died A. D. 1208.

Mishnah, a collection of all the ancient traditions of the Jews, to the time of Rabbi Judah Hakkodish, the compiler of it, who flourished about the middle of the second century, in the reign of the Emperor Antoninus Pius. This book is the text to the Talmud, and that a comment on it. The Jerusalem Talmud was compiled by the Jews who dwelt in Judæa, about 360 years after Christ ; and the Babylonish Talmud by

those who dwelt in Mesopotamia, about 500 years after Christ, according to the account which the Jewish writers give of them. But there are several things contained in the latter, which seem to refer to a much later date. These three, with the two Chaldee paraphrases of Onkelos and Jonathan, are the ancientest books which the Jews have, next the Bible. For how much noise soever may be made about their Rabbinical writers, there are none of them above seven hundred years old. There are some of them indeed lay claim to a much ancients date, but without any reason for it.

GREEK AUTHORS.

ARISTOTELIS *Ethica* and *Politica*.

Bartholomæi Edeffeni *Confutatio Hagareni*, a Greek tract against Mahometism, published by Le Moyne among his *Varia Sacra*. The author was a monk of Edeffa in Mesopotamia. In what age he lived doth not appear.

Cantacuzenus contra *Sectam Mahometicam*. This book contains four apologies for the Christian religion, and four orations against the Mahometan. The author had been emperor of Constantinople, but resigning his empire to John Palæologus his son-in-law, A. D. 1355, he retired into a monastery, where being accompanied by Meletius, formerly called Achæmemid, whom he had converted from Mahometism to the Christian religion, he there wrote this book for the said Meletius, in answer to a letter written to him by Sampfates, a Persian of Hispahan, to reduce him back again to the Mahometan superstition.

Cedreni *Compendium Historiarum*, an History from the beginning of the world, to the year of our Lord 1057.

Chrysoftomi *Homiliæ*.

Confutatio Mahometis, a Greek tract, published by Le Moye among his *Varia Sacra*; the author not known.

Dionysii Halicarnassæi *Antiquitates Romane*.

Eusebii *Historia Ecclesiastica*, and *Præparatio Evangelica*.

Hierocles, the Fomentor and chief manager of the tenth persecution against the Christians. He was first governor of Bithynia, and after of Egypt, in both which places he persecuted the Christians with the utmost severity; and not content herewith, he also wrote two books against them, which he called *λόγους φιλαλήθους*, wherein, among other things, he compared Apollonius Tyaneus with Jesus Christ, and endeavoured to prove him, in working of miracles to have been equal to him; to which particular Eusebius wrote an answer, which is still extant among his works; but these books of Hierocles are now wholly lost, excepting some fragments preserved in the said answer of Eusebius.

Josephi *Antiquitates Judaciæ*, and *de Bello Judaico*.

Origenes *contra Celsum*.

Philostratus *de Vita Apollonii Tyanei*.

Phlegon Trallianus, a freed man of Adrian the Emperor. He wrote a *Chronicon* or history, which he called the history of the Olympiads. It contained 229 Olympiads, whereof the last ended in the fourth year of the Emperor Antonius Pius. But there is nothing of this work now extant, except some few fragments, as they are now preserved in such authors as have quoted it. That relating to the eclipse of the sun at our Saviour's crucifixion is preserved in Eusebius' *Chronicon*, and is also made mention of by Origen, in his 35th tract on St. Matthew's gospel, and in his second book against Celsus.

Plato.

Plutarchi *Vitæ*.

Strabonis *Geographia*.

Socratis Scholastici *Historia Ecclesiastica*.

Sozomeni Historia Ecclesiastica.

Theophanis Chronographia ; this is one of the Byzantine historians, and contains a Chronological History of the Roman Empire, from the year of our Lord 285 to the year 813. The author was a nobleman of Constantinople, where he was first an officer of the Imperial court, but afterwards turning monk wrote this history. He was born A. D. 758, and A. D. 815 died in prison in the island of Samothracia, a martyr for image-worship, for which he had been a zealous champion in the second council of Nice.

Zonaræ Compendium Historiarum. Another of the Byzantine historians. It contains an history from the beginning of the world to the death of Alexius Comnenus, emperor of Constantinople ; which happened A. D. 1118, when the author flourished. He was first a prime officer of the Imperial court at Constantinople ; but afterwards became an Ecclesiastick, and is the same who wrote the Comment on the Greek Canons.

LATIN AUTHORS ANCIENT AND MODERN.

AMMIANI Marcellini Historia.

Anastasio Bibliothecarii Historia Ecclesiastica. The author was a priest of the church of Rome, and library-keeper to the Pope. He flourished about the year of our Lord 870.

Bellonii Observationes de Locis ac Rebus Memorabilibus in Asia. This book was first published in French, A. D. 1553, and after in Latin, A. D. 1589.

Bocharti Hierozoicon.

Busbequii Epistolæ; the author was ambassador from the Emperor Ferdinand the First to the Porte, from whence he wrote his epistles.

Buxtorfi Lexicon Rabbinicum.

Buxtorfi Synagoga Judaica.

Caroli a Sancto Paulo Geographia sacra, five Notitia antiqua Episcopatum Ecclesiæ Univerſæ. Lutetiæ Parisiorum, A. D. 1641.

Elenardi Epistolæ. The author of these epistles was the most famous grammarian of his age. Out of love to the Arabic tongue, he went to Fez, on purpose to learn it, A. D. 1540, when well advanced in years, from whence he wrote many things in his epistles, of the manners and religion of the Mahometans. He died at Granada in Spain as soon as he returned.

Cusani Cribratio Alcorani. The author of this book was the famous Nicolas de Cusa, the eminentest scholar of the age in which he lived. In the year 1448 he was made cardinal of Rome, by the title of St. Peter's ad Vincula, and died A. D. 1464, about ten years after the Turks had taken Constantinople. Which seems to have given him the occasion of writing this book, that so he might provide an antidote against that false religion, which on that success had gotten so great an advantage for its farther spreading itself in those parts of the world. For it appears by the dedication, that this book was not written till after the loss of that city; it being dedicated to Pope Pius Secundus, who entered not on the papacy till the Turks had been about three years in possession of it.

Abrahami Ecchellenſis Historia Arabum. This book is subjoined to his Chronicon Orientale, in two parts, collected out of the Arab writers. The author was a Maronite, of mount Libanus in Syria, and was employed as professor of the Oriental languages in the college de propaganda Fide at Rome, from whence about the year 1640, he was called to Paris, to assist in preparing the great Polyglott Bible for the press, which was there publishing, and made the king's professor of

the Oriental languages in that city. The part assigned him in this work, was that which they had before employed Sionita in, a man of thorough abilities to perform it; but on some distaste taken against him, they discharged him, and sent to Rome for Ecchellenfis; of whose performance herein a learned Sorbonist making a censurè, truly says, ‘Ibi peccatum est toties ac tam enormiter in apponendis vocalibus & apiculis, ut quod ibi primum inter legendum occurrerit, summam sapere videatur Tyronis alicujus oscitantiam.’ He was indeed a man but of little accuracy in the learning which he professed, and shews himself to be a very futile and injudicious writer, in most of that which he hath published.

Abrahami Ecchellenfis Eutychius vindicatus; which book is in two parts; the first written against Mr. Selden’s Eutychiî Patriarchæ Alexandrini Ecclesiæ suæ Origines; and the second against Hottinger’s Historia Orientalis. The greatest skill which he shews in this book, is in railing. It was published at Rome A. D. 1661.

Forbesii Instructiones Historico Theologicæ, published at Amsterdam, 1645.

Fortalitium Fidei, a book written in defence of the Christian religion against the Jews, Mahometans, and other adversaries. The author takes occasion to acquaint us, Lib. 2. Consideratione 6. Hæref. 5. that he was at work in writing this book A. D. 1458; and the title of the first printed edition tells us, that it was finished the year following, and that the author was an eminent doctor of the order of the Franciscan friars. It was printed first at Nuremberg, A. D. 1494, and after that at Lyons, A. D. 1525. But in all these editions the name of the author being suppressed, some have called it the work of William Toton, who was only the editor of the second edition; and others have ascribed it to others. But Mariana, in the second tome of his Spanish History, lib. 22. cap. 13, tells us,

the true author of the book was Alphonfus Spina, a Franciscan friar of Castile in Spain, who from a Jew turning Christian, entered himself of that order, and after, by several advances, came to be a bishop in that kingdom. But the present general of the Jesuits, notwithstanding the authority of this great man of his order, in a book lately published by him against the Mahometan religion, still ascribes it to William Toton. But the book is of better use to acquaint us with the doctrines and opinions of the Christians of that age, than to give us any true light either of Mahomet or his religion. For in that part which is levelled against this imposture, too many of his arguments are built upon such relations, both concerning it and the author thereof, as have no other bottom, but the mistaken traditions of the vulgar.

Golii Notæ ad Alfragani Elementa Astronomica; which are exceeding useful for the understanding of the geography of the East. The book was published at Leyden, A. D. 1669.

Philippi Guadagnoli Apologia pro Christiana Religione, contra Objectiones Ahmed Filii Zin Alabedin Persæ Aspahensis. Of which book I have already given an account in what I have written of Ahmed Ebn Zin, against whom it is written.

Gentii Notæ ad Mufladini Saadi Rosarium Politicum; published at Amsterdam, A. D. 1651.

Grotius de Veritate Christianæ Religionis; & Epistolæ ad Gallos.

Hottingeri Historia Orientalis. Of this book there are two editions; the first A. D. 1651, and the second A. D. 1660, the latter is much enlarged. The author was professor of the Oriental tongues, first at Zurich in Switzerland, and afterwards at Heidelberg; from whence being called to be professor at Leyden, he was, while on his removal thither, unfortunately drowned in the Rhine. He was a man of great industry and learning; but having written very much within

the compass of a few years (for he died young) his books want accuracy; though all of them have their use.

Historia Miscella, a Roman history begun by Eutropius, continued by Paulus Diaconus, and finished by Landulphus Sagax.

Johannes Andreas de *Confusione Sectæ Mahometanæ*. The author of this book was formerly an Alfaki, or a doctor of the Mahometan law; but in the year 1487, being at Valentia in Spain converted to the Christian religion, he was received into holy orders, and wrote this book in Spanish against the religion which he forsook; from whence it was translated into Italian by Dominicus de Gazelu, A. D. 1540. And out of that translation it was published in Latin by Johannes Lauterbach, A. D. 1595, and re-printed by Voetius at Utrecht, A. D. 1656. He having thoroughly understood the religion which he confutes, doth much more pertinently write against it, than many others do that handle this argument.

Macrobian *Saturnalia*.

Caii Plinii Secundi *Naturalis Historia*.

Caii Plinii Cæcilii Secundi *Epistolæ*.

Pocock. The famous professor of the Hebrew and Arabic tongues at Oxford; who was, for eminency of goodness, as well as learning, the greatest ornament of the age in which he lived, and God blessed him with a long life to be useful thereto. He was born A. D. 1604, and died at Christ-Church in Oxford, in the month of September, A. D. 1691. He was for above sixty years a constant editor of learned and useful books: The first which he published, contains an edition of four of the Catholic Epistles in Syriac, *i. e.* the Second of St. Peter, the Second and Third of St. John, and the Epistle of St. Jude, with versions and notes, which was printed at Leyden, A. D. 1630, by Vossius, to whom he presented it the year before at Oxford, on his coming thither to see that university: and the

last was his Commentary on Joel, which came forth the year in which he died. His *Specimen Historiæ Arabicæ*, which I frequently make use of in this tract, was published A. D. 1650, and is a most accurate and judicious collection out of the best Arab writers, relating to the subject which he handles.

Richardi Confutatio Legis Saracenicæ. The author was a Dominican friar, who in the year 1210, went to Bagdat, on purpose to study the Mahometan religion out of their own books, in order to confute it; and on his return published this learned and judicious tract concerning it. Demetrius Cydonius translated it into Greek for the Emperor Cantacuzenus, who makes great use of it, taking thence most of that which he hath of any moment in his four Orations against the Mahometan religion. From this Greek version of Demetrius Cydonius it was translated back again into Latin by Bartholomæus Picens, which translation is published with the Latin Alcoran of Bibliander, and that is all we now have of it, the original being lost. This, and Johannes Andreas' tract de Confusione Sectæ Mahometanæ, are the best of any that have been formerly published by the Western writers on this argument, and best accord with what the Mahometans themselves teach of their religion. Others have too much spent themselves on false notions concerning it, for want of an exact knowledge of that which they wrote against.

Roderici Toletani Historia Arabum. It contains an history of the Saracens from the birth of Mahomet to the year of our Lord 1150. The author was archbishop of Toledo in Spain, and was present at the Lateran council, A. D. 1215. His history, from the tenth chapter, is mostly confined to the Saracens of Spain, and is but of little credit, where he relates any thing of them out of that country. It was published with Erpenius' *Historia Saracena* at Leyden, A. D. 1625.

Shickardi Tarich, seu Series Regum Persarum, Tubingæ, A. D. 1628.

Spanhemii Introductio ad Historiam Sacram, Amstel. A. D. 1694.

Scaliger de Emendatione Temporum, and Notæ ejus ad Sphæram Manilii.

Valerius Maximus.

Vaninus, a famous Atheist. He was by birth a Neapolitan, and came into France on purpose to promote the impiety he had embraced; of which being convicted at Tholouse, he rather chose to become a martyr for it, than renounce it; and therefore was publicly burned in that city, A. D. 1619, persisting to deny the being of a God with a wonderful obstinacy even in those flames in which he perished. He wrote two books; the first was published A. D. 1615, entitled *Æternæ Providentiæ Amphitheatrum*; and the other the next year after, which is his *Dialogi de Admirandis Naturæ*, in both which he serves that cause for the sake of which he died.

ENGLISH AND FRENCH AUTHORS.

PURCHAS' Pilgrimage.

Ricaut's History of the Present State of the Ottoman Empire.

Smyth's Remarks upon the Manners, Religion, and Government of the Turks.

Thevenot's Travels.

FINIS.

